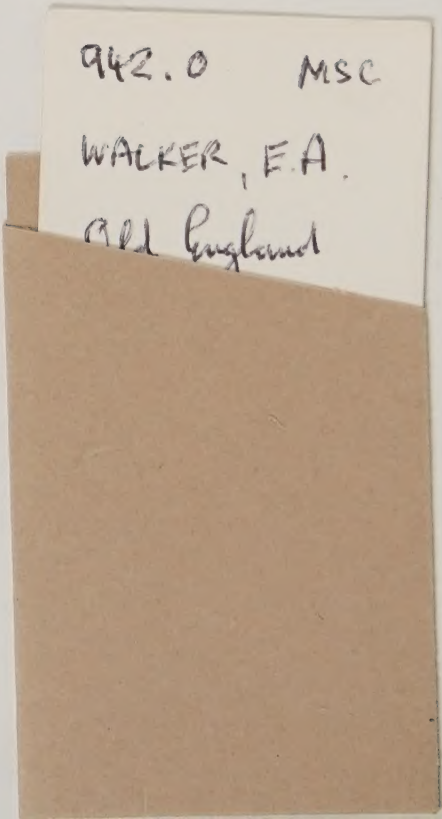
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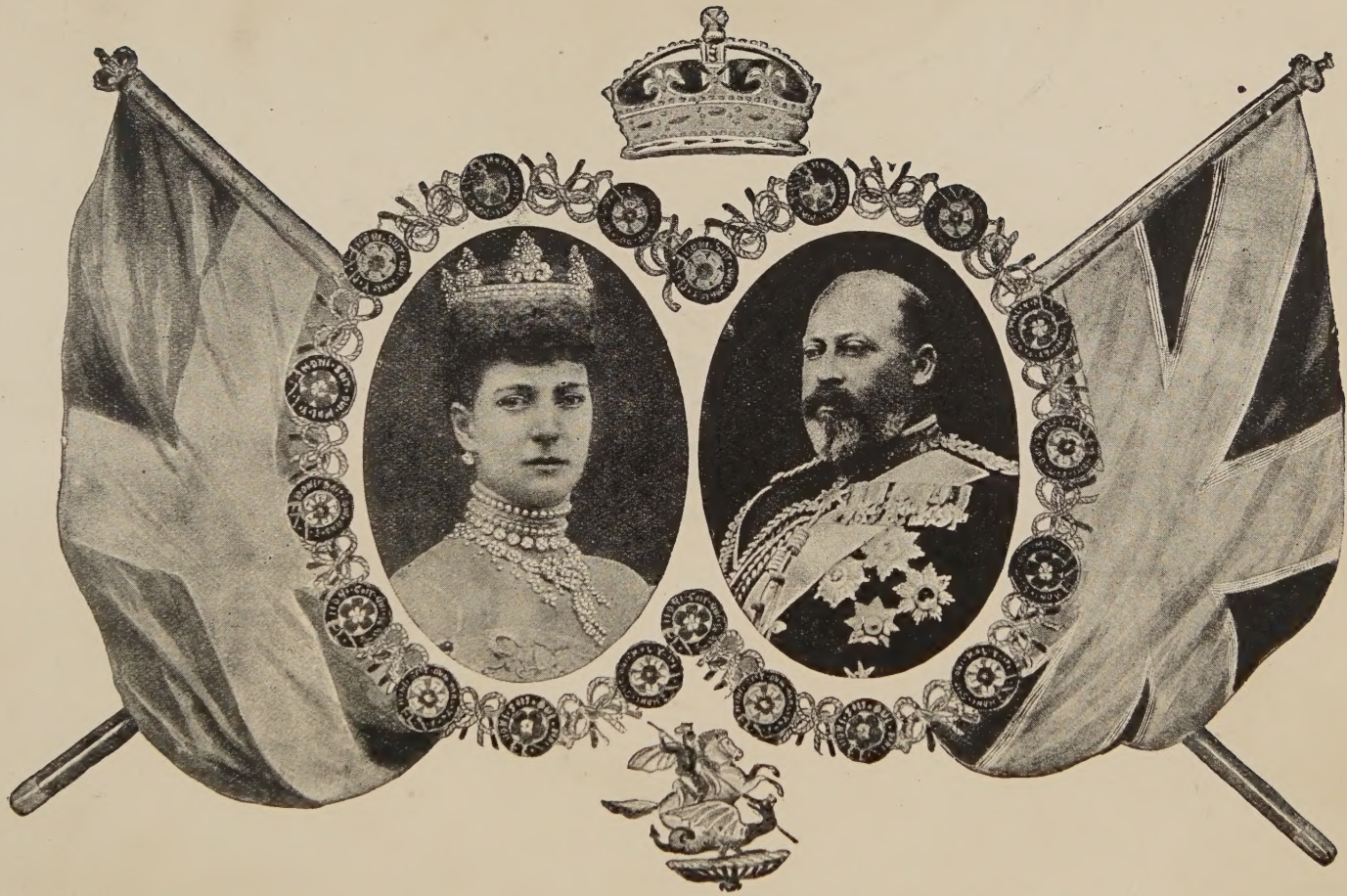

Photo by] THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN OF ENGLAND. [STUART, RICHMOND.

OLD ENGLAND:

Sketches of English History.

By E. A. WALKER,

AUTHOR OF "WOMANHOOD," "HYMNS AND THOUGHTS IN VERSE," "MEMOIR OF SOPHIA COOKE; OR, FORTY-TWO YEARS' WORK IN SINGAPORE," ETC. ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE.

THIS little book does not profess to be a History of England. It is only, as its name imports, a series of sketches from English History. It is specially designed for those who have not leisure to read large volumes, and the author will rejoice if it may be allowed a place in our Free and Parish libraries, and receive a welcome sometimes in the cottage of the peasant, and in the home of the day labourer.

It is hoped, also, that (though not meant for *children*) it may be helpful to youthful students, and may likewise serve to refresh the memories of older persons who have perhaps forgotten what they learnt long ago.

Histories are apt to be very lengthy, in which case young readers often burthen themselves to remember much unnecessary detail, or they are merely dry summaries of events. In *Old England* an attempt is made, by leaving on one side all matters of secondary importance, to furnish graphic and interesting, though short, sketches of the past history of our own land.

Every Englishman and every Englishwoman should know the history of their own country. This manifestly true axiom is doubly important in these days, when political power is becoming so widely extended. For no one can be a good or safe politician who has not studied the history of his native land. It is at least as dangerous for a nation as for an individual to neglect the experience of the past.

Many useful lessons may be learnt from the mistakes and from the wisdom of our forefathers, from their vices and from their virtues, from their failures and from their successes. We may avoid their errors.

We may copy their virtues. We may notice where they expended labour for objects which ultimately proved valueless. We may observe that some institutions which once seemed of value were so only for a time; while, on the other hand, others remain for ever of the same importance. Time tests all things, and we, who live only for a day, cannot afford to disregard the verdicts obtained of men and things from the past. Not that we are to be slavish imitators of preceding generations. A man does not show that he has profited from his childhood by remaining always boyish. Nevertheless, it is from experience that wisdom is obtained which may be brought to bear upon questions both old and new, while principles of right and wrong remain at all times the same.

Amidst suggestions made to the consideration of teachers in the Public Elementary schools, we find the following words: "An important place should be given to History in the curriculum of every school."[1]

History rightly treated teaches Patriotism, and along with it a respect for foreign nations with whom we, for so many generations, have come into contact. At the same time we may trace in it, not only the development of the human mind and its works, but also the gently guiding hand of Providence, leading nations, as it leads individuals, by ways they know not, to ever-widening fields of usefulness and of power.

All power is of God; and hence, as has been well said, to God all who possess any share of it are responsible for its use.

"God is the King over all the earth! He shall inherit all nations."

NOTE.

It being impossible to give references for all the quotations which form so large a proportion of a compilation like this, it may be well to mention *some* of the authors consulted, viz. Bede, Sharon Turner, Stow, Freeman, Froude, Clarendon, Pepys, Evelyn, De Foe, Voltaire, Macaulay, Lingard, Roche, Mahon, Jesse, Bancroft, Burnet, Cassell, Macfarlane, Taswell-Longmead, Yonge, Döllinger, Earle, Hughes, and the works of James I. and letters of Charles I. to Henrietta Maria.

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[1] See *Blue Book*, 1905, page 61, chapter viii.

THE FLAG OF BRITAIN.

Flag of Britain, proudly waving
Over many distant seas,
Flag of Britain, boldly braving
Blinding fog and adverse breeze,
We salute thee, and we pray
God to bless our land to-day!

Flag of Britain! wheresoever
Thy bright colours are outspread,
Slavery must cease for ever,
Light and Freedom reign instead.
We salute thee, and we pray
God to bless our land to-day!

Flag of Britain! 'mid the nations
May it ever speak of peace,
And proclaim to farthest stations
All unworthy strife must cease!
We salute it, and we pray
God to bless our land to-day!

But if duty sternly need it,
Freely let it be unfurl'd;
Winds of Heaven then may speed it,
To each corner of the world.
We salute it, and we pray
God to bless our land to-day!

Love of it across the waters
Passing with electric thrill,
Binds our distant sons and daughters
Heart to heart with Britain still!
We salute it, and we pray
God to bless our land to-day!

Regions East and West united,
All our Empire join'd as one
By right loyal hearts united,
Let it wave beneath the sun!
We salute it, and we pray,
Bless, O God, our land to-day!

E. A. Walker.

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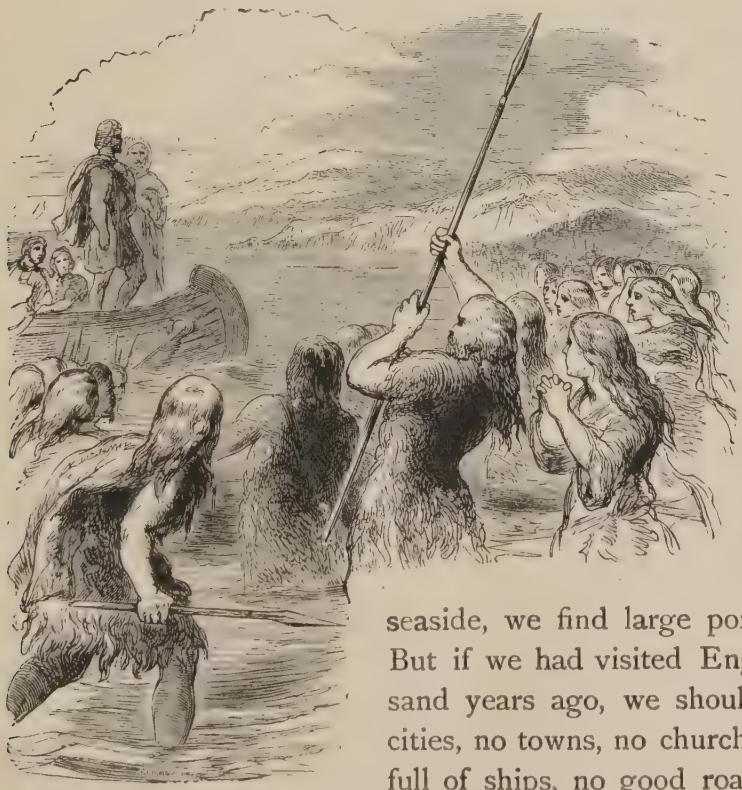
CHAPTER I.

BRITAIN—FROM A TIME UNKNOWN TO B.C. 50.



Old England, our beloved country, was once upon a time in a very different condition to what it is now. As we travel from place to place now by the trains, we pass towns and cities, and when we come to the seaside, we find large ports full of ships. But if we had visited England two thousand years ago, we should have seen no cities, no towns, no churches; no harbours full of ships, no good roads. What then should we have beheld? We should have seen great forests stretching far and wide, in which prowled wolves and bears, while beavers built their curious dwellings across the lonely rivers. We should have seen broad marshes extending for many miles, and heavy fogs brooding over the damp ground. But it was no desert, unin-

habited land. We should have seen round huts made of twisted osiers filled in with clay, and sometimes clustered together in considerable numbers. In these huts dwelt the old Britons. They were a fine, tall race of men, with blue eyes and flowing light hair, but without beards. Brave and fierce, they loved liberty, but they also loved fighting. Many different tribes dwelt in different parts of our island, and these were always quarrelling with each other, and hence England, or Britain, as it was then called, could not become one great nation. Very ignorant were they of many things, and yet they were not savages. Their garments were chiefly of skins. They made themselves boats called coracles, in which they paddled about in the rivers to fish. They trained hounds to help them in hunting. They made chariots in which their chiefs led them to battle. Those who dwelt in the south, specially in Kent and in Cornwall, traded with the people of Gaul, or France, as it is now called, selling them slaves, tin, iron, corn, and cattle, and even some gold, which is said to have been then found in our land.

They were very religious in their way, but a sad dark religion they had! They worshipped the sun and moon, and the gods of war, beauty, and plenty. They had a mighty order of priests called Druids. It was a great honour to be admitted into this order, and a man would sometimes spend twenty years in preparing for it. In the gloomy depths of the great thick woods might often be seen terrible deeds. There, shut up into wicker baskets, men, women, or children would be killed, or burnt in the flames as sacrifices to the gods! Woe to any one who offended these stern priests; and yet they were not altogether bad men. They were learned about many things, and taught the people about the stars, and about mathematics. They built wonderful temples, remains of which you may see now if you go to Stonehenge near Salisbury, or to Avebury, also in Wiltshire. They loved their country, and we shall see they were ready to fight and to die for it. Such was the state of Old England about the time that our blessed Lord came into the world to be a light to lighten all nations, as well as the glory of His ancient people.

CHAPTER II.

ROMAN CONQUEST—FROM ABOUT B.C. 50 TO ABOUT A.D. 85.

"SWEET are the uses of adversity!" Men often learn much from troubles, and so do nations. Who knows how long Old England might have remained half savage, wasted with constant wars, and terror-stricken by their gloomy religion, if they had been left for ever to themselves? But this was not to be, and a strange event happened about fifty years before the birth of Christ which was the beginning of great changes in our land. This event was the invasion and conquest of the country by the Romans.

Who were the Romans? They were one of the most remarkable nations that have ever existed. They were the inhabitants of Italy. Italy had been at one time divided into a number of little States. By degrees the people of Rome conquered them all, and gave their proud name to all the rest. Their soldiers were trained to be very brave, obedient, and hardy. They were fed chiefly on coarse bread, and on pulse, a thick sort of pottage made of meal, beans, lentils, or peas, and drank a weak kind of native wine, like vinegar. But they were strong and bold, and under their great generals they would march whithersoever they were led. Whither did they not march? They marched eastward, and conquered. They marched northward, and conquered. They marched over mountains, hills, and dales, and always conquered. They crossed the seas, and conquered Egypt and Palestine, and Greece and Syria and Persia. Spain and France and great parts of Germany, and what are now Belgium and Holland, were conquered one after the other; and still they were not satisfied, and still they wanted to conquer more. From France the Romans

looked across the water, and could sometimes see white cliffs gleaming in the distance. Those were the cliffs of Old England, and much they wished to cross the water and conquer this far-away island. For they had heard that there were fertile fields in it, and that tin and silver and even sometimes gold were found in its mines, and that the inhabitants were brave and strong.

At last, a general called Julius Cæsar, who wanted very much to make himself a great name, determined to conquer Britain. He collected his ships together, and soon they reached the shores. But the soldiers, bold as they were, were frightened by the fierce men who came trooping down the steep cliffs ready to fight them. They hung back, till a brave standard-bearer jumped into the water, and shouted to his comrades to follow. So they landed, and, being better armed and trained than the Britons, they gained some success. But, a few days afterwards, a great storm came on and injured their ships. So Julius Cæsar thought they had better get away at once, and they went back to Gaul.

This was the first invasion of the Romans, but it was only a little threatening of what was to come by and by.

Next year Julius Cæsar came again with eight hundred ships, two thousand horsemen, and a great army of soldiers. What could the poor Britons do against such a force? They knew they could not stand against them, so they fled to their woods. But still they had no idea of being beaten, and whenever the Romans came up to them, they fought them bravely, and the Druids led them on with desperate courage to the fight. But it was no use. Unfortunately their different chiefs had been so in the habit of fighting with each other that they were not ready to join hand to hand against the foreign enemy. So again and again they were overcome, until at last, in later years, the Romans, under their general Agricola, marched onward and onward through the land, reached the far north, and even went far into Scotland.

Amongst those who fought most bravely against the invaders was a king named Caractacus (A.D. 50), and a queen named Boadicea (A.D. 62). Caractacus ruled in the midland of our country. He was brave,

persevering, and intelligent. Far and wide his name was known and honoured, and the hopes of the Britons rested on him. But he was conquered, and with his wife and children was carried to Rome. A long dreary journey it must have been to the fallen chief. Many hardships must the poor captives have suffered. But the spirit of Caractacus was not broken, and when he and his wife were brought in chains before the great Emperor Claudius, he defended himself, and said that by fighting in defence of his country he had brought glory to himself, and made the emperor more glorious who had conquered him.

The Romans treated him kindly, and took the chains from his arms, and some say they let him return to Old England again, and rule a small part of it under them.

They behaved much worse to the proud, brave Queen Boadicea. When she complained of some lands being unjustly taken from her, they whipped her, and insulted her fair young daughters. No wonder, then, that, stung with rage, she roused up her people to defend her. At first she seemed successful. London, which was quite a Roman town, was burned, and seventy thousand Romans are said to have been put to death. Boadicea herself, "dressed in a long mantle, a chain of gold round her waist, and her long hair flowing to the ground," led them to another battle. But now she had to meet ten thousand Roman soldiers, advancing with all the skill of practised legions. She was defeated, and eighty thousand Britons were left dead on the ground. Rather than be taken captive, the unhappy queen took poison and died.

Thus at last the Romans became lords over all the land, and the Britons, no longer free to wander at will through their forests, were completely subdued.

CHAPTER III.

ROMAN RULE—FROM ABOUT A.D. 85 TO A.D. 410.

THE Romans had conquered all Britain. What did they do with it? They held it about three hundred and twenty-five years, and during that period they wonderfully altered its condition, and in many ways improved it.

First, they made great roads from end to end of the land. There were four in particular of much importance, known as Watling Street, the Foss, Icknield Street, and Ermyn Street. Watling Street went from London to Shropshire, and thence passed into Wales. The Foss went from Devonshire to Lincoln. The Icknield road passed from Bury in Suffolk to Gloucester, and Ermyn Street ran through the Fens from London to Lincoln, and so on to the south of Scotland. There were many other roads, but these were the four chief.

They formed great encampments, remains of which may be seen to this day. They built upwards of a hundred towns, the principal of which were London, Colchester, Bath, Gloucester, York, Chester, Lincoln, and Chesterfield. Remains of their work may be seen to this day in many a strong old wall and gateway. At Bath we see remains of the grand baths they built in which to enjoy the healing "Waters of the Sun," as they called them. Near Brading in the Isle of Wight may still be seen ruins of a villa which some Roman built long ago. It had a court or portico, with a dozen rooms, one being a fine chamber of considerable size, in which a handsome mosaic pavement still remains. Think of that! These Roman hands did no slack work. Whatever they undertook, they accomplished in the best fashion possible, and they did it all TO LAST![1]

[1] Silchester, in Hampshire, was an important Roman town, the plan of which has been

Traces are still plain of Roman mining operations in lead, copper, iron, and coal in various English counties, and pottery kilns with Roman letters on vessels are found in Somersetshire, Worcestershire, Northamptonshire, and Essex. Glass was also manufactured, and ornaments of jet.

A traffic went on with distant Rome, and foreign luxuries were brought to our shores. In fact, the Britons must have gazed with surprise at all the wonderful things accomplished by their new lords. But, after all, it was only "like a piece of new cloth on an old garment." The Romans despised the Britons, and lived quite aloof from them. But our forefathers saw what comfort and civilisation were, and could never again be satisfied with their former semi-barbarous life.

By and by the great Empire of Rome began to fall to pieces. The people became corrupt and self-indulgent. The wild tribes of Germany and Hungary poured in upon Italy. Then their soldiers were called back from foreign lands, amongst others from England. Again they entered their ships, and left for ever the island which never more would bow beneath the yoke of Rome!

recently revealed. We read that "the wall still remains, and the position of its four gates has been ascertained. The circuit was about a mile and a half, and within this have been traced not only the lines of streets, and the course of the main roads, but the forum has been uncovered, and also the remains of temples, as well as of houses with their tesselated floors. The forum, or court, was in the centre of the city. . . . There was an amphitheatre outside the walls, of which formerly the ranges of seats could be traced. . . A bronze Roman eagle was discovered. . . . The oldest coin discovered is one of Augustus, date about A.D. 50."

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANITY IN BRITAIN.

We often hear of missionary meetings. We see clergymen and ladies ready to go to India, China, Japan, or Africa, to tell the heathen about the blessed Saviour. Do we remember that our own Britain was once a heathen land, and needed missionaries to come and preach the gospel?

When and how did Christianity come to Britain? It is not unlikely that some Roman soldiers in the armies of the Cæsars may have been the first Christians to tread on our shores. Some say, however, that the great Apostle Paul himself came here, according to what his friend Clement wrote of him, that "he came to the farthest limits of the West." Then, again, there is a curious old story that Joseph of Arimathea landed on the south-west coast of England, and that he miraculously planted his thorn-staff and made it grow and blossom at Glastonbury! We need not believe this fable, but of course it is *possible* that either Joseph or Paul came. One would like to think that the great Apostle of the Gentiles, the pattern of all missionaries, was here, but it cannot be proved. Another pretty story is that Bran, Claudia, and Tenus, father, daughter, and son of Caractacus, became Christians in Rome, and on returning from captivity brought the gospel with them. But one thing seems pretty certain. Many missionaries came to England from Gaul, who had themselves been taught about Christ by unknown believers who had travelled from the East. We know this, because the early British Christians used to keep Easter at the same time as did the Greek Church, and not as did the Romans. Certain it is that Christianity spread rapidly throughout our land, and by the beginning of the

fourth century after Christ it was so firmly established that three English bishops were sent to a council held at Arles, in Gaul.

But the early Roman emperors hated Christianity. They were accustomed to be honoured themselves as gods, and were very unwilling to acknowledge the crucified Jesus as King, and as the Son of God. They persecuted the Christians, therefore, even in their most distant provinces, and some were put to death here in England.

There was a brave and wealthy Roman named Alban, who one day kindly sheltered a Christian priest who was being pursued by the soldiers. From him Alban learned the truth as it is in Jesus. To Christ he gave his whole heart, and was ready to die rather than give him up. He was seized. He was commanded to burn incense to the heathen gods. He refused. He was tortured, but would not obey. Then he was dragged outside the city, "to a hill called Holmhurst, adorned, or rather clothed, with all kinds of flowers, having its sides neither perpendicular nor even craggy, but sloping down into a most beautiful plain, worthy from its lovely appearance to be the scene of the martyr's suffering. Here, therefore, his head was struck off, and he received the crown of life which God has promised to those that love Him."[1] That youthful martyr can never be forgotten in England. There is now a Bishop of St. Albans, in Hertfordshire, the cathedral and town being called after him.

Are there any young men ready to follow now in Alban's steps, and who are not ashamed to own Christ? Our own brave General Gordon was such a one, to whom we see a beautiful statue erected in Trafalgar Square.

The Liturgy, or Church Service, used in the early British Church, was said to have been compiled by the Apostle St. John. Certain it is, it did not come from Rome.

What a blessed change from the religion of the Druids to that of the Lord Jesus Christ! No more human sacrifices! no more gloomy rites! An old Briton might have said, as a Mohammedan lately converted in India said, when he was asked why he embraced Christianity, "I never knew love till I heard of the Lord Jesus!"

[1] See Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. Some historians question the truth of this story.

CHAPTER V.

FROM ABOUT A.D. 410 TO ABOUT A.D. 836—INVASION AND MISERY.

It must have seemed strange to the Britons to see the Romans who had dwelt so long in their land depart from its shores. They were accustomed to obey them almost as if they were a superior order of beings. Under their rule, quiet had been established. No enemies dared to invade them. But now they were gradually leaving them. Legion after legion of soldiers marched to Kent or Sussex, to embark for Italy. From city after city which they had founded, and where they had long dwelt, the stalwart companies came forth, and filed, hundreds by hundreds, down to the ships, mostly, doubtless, rejoicing to leave this distant isle and return to their beloved Italy. How long it took to withdraw them all we cannot exactly say. But soon only a few Romans remained in the land,—civilians who preferred to stay in the towns where they had so long dwelt, a few wealthy men who did not choose to leave the beautiful villas they had built, sick people who were unable to go, however much they desired it.

It was as if, a few years ago, Queen Victoria had called back all the English from India, and left the Hindoos to themselves.

Probably the Britons gazed on their departing conquerors with mixed feelings of amazement and pleasure. Yes, they were going, these haughty strangers who treated them all as slaves. Yes, they were going, these people of a different speech to theirs, who never cared to show more than a proud compassion towards them, except in those few instances where an officer or soldier was a *true* Christian, who then felt every fellow-Christian, be he even a poor Briton, to be his brother.

But if the Britons rejoiced to see the Romans leave their shores, and exulted when the sails of their vessels carried the last legions away, their joy did not last long.

Soon the Picts and Scots, fierce tribes who dwelt to the north of England and in Scotland, and who had long been kept off by dread of the Romans, came pouring into the land. They overran large districts with astonishing rapidity. They harried and worried them. They ravaged the country, and carried off the harvests.

In despair the Britons sent off a piteous appeal to the Romans, to return and defend them from these wild invaders. This petition was called "The Groans of the Britons." "The barbarians," they wrote, "chase us into the sea; the sea throws us back upon the shore; and we have only the choice left us between perishing by the sword or by the sea."

But the Romans had enough to do to defend their own crumbling empire, and they turned a deaf ear to the appeal of the far-away islanders. So the weary warfare went on, till at last one of the British chiefs, called Vortigern, foolishly sent to ask help from some of the tribes who swarmed on the northern coasts of Germany. Jutes, Angles, Saxons, such were the names of these tribes. Heathen, warlike, fierce, despising a settled life and any habits of industry, they roved wherever they could, and lived mostly on plunder. Naturally they were forced to spread farther and farther, and they were only too ready to cross the Northern Sea and leap on British shores.

They drove back the Picts and Scots, indeed, but very soon they showed that they themselves had no idea of leaving. The Britons found that to keep out the stream they had let in the ocean! Too late they roused themselves to endeavour to get rid of these new invaders! In vain! Their numbers were endless. Bit by bit the Angles possessed themselves of their land. With reckless cruelty they burnt alike the towns of the Romans, the hamlets of the Britons, the little Christian churches which were dotted over the land. The Britons now fought desperately, for house and home, for the dear life itself. But in vain! Inch by inch was contested, but the wild strangers, like wolves among a flock of sheep, slew them by thousands. The Britons were almost

utterly destroyed. Those who were left were driven back and back westwards to Somersetshire, Devonshire, Cornwall, and to what is now called Wales, where they even lost their old name of Britons, and were called Welsh or strangers. Meanwhile the rest of our country became known as England, or the land of the Angles, who took possession of more territory than the other invading tribes. In about one hundred and fifty years the invaders had spread like a flood over the whole country.

Then began another series of fights! One chief fought against another. A perpetual scramble went on amongst the conquerors for the best portions of the country, like "the battles of kites and crows"!

But by degrees some few chiefs showed themselves stronger than the rest. Seven stood out as the most powerful. From amongst these one was sometimes acknowledged as over-lord. In A.D. 836, Egbert, who had made himself master of the kingdoms of the west, became over-lord, and under him England began to be consolidated into one single kingdom.

CHAPTER VI.

PERIOD: THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH CENTURIES AFTER CHRIST—HOW CHRISTIANITY WAS INTRODUCED AMONGST THE ENGLISH.

The new tribes who had settled in England were idolaters. They worshipped many gods and half gods or heroes, and took a good way to remember some of these by calling the days of the week after them. Thus Sunday was the day of the Sun; Monday, that of the Moon; Tuesday was named in honour of a god called Tiw; Wednesday was sacred to the great god Woden, from whom all their kings were supposed to have descended; Thursday was the day of the Thunder-god; Friday, that of the god Frea; and another god called Sœtere came in for his share of devotion on the last day of the week. Besides this, hills, woods, and streams were often held sacred; fairies were supposed to dance in the meadows; ghosts, demons, and monsters to haunt the woods and fens. It was a gloomy religion.

Our old forefathers needed a revelation as much as do any Hindoos or Africans now. How did Christianity come to them?

Here and there a few of the old inhabitants were left amongst them, but too poor and too despised to have much influence with them. The British Christians of Wales and Cornwall maintained their old faith, but were not powerful or courageous enough to carry on missions amongst those who had slain their brethren and driven them away as fugitives.

Christianity came to the English from two quarters—from the north and from the south; from the Scotch and Irish in the north, and from Rome, now no longer pagan.

Off the west coast of Scotland, eight miles south of the wonderful

cave of Staffa, is a little rocky island now called Iona, only three and a half miles long, and one mile and a half broad. On the eve of Whitsunday A.D. 565 there landed a remarkable man upon the shining, pebbly beach of one of the little creeks of this island. His name was Columba. He came from Ireland, where he had quarrelled with his bishop, who would not let him keep a manuscript copy he had made

IONA.

from one of his books. Reproved and angry, Columba left his native shores with some of his friends.

"Large is the tear of my soft grey eye,
When I look back upon Erin."[1]

So he sang, but he soon became fond of his new home. He loved to watch the great bright green waves of the Atlantic beat on its shores, and to see the mists curl and wind over the distant hills. He founded a brotherhood there, which became very famous. Some of them tilled the land; some made copies of the Holy Scriptures, for there was no printing then; others went off in their small boats to preach the gospel far and near. Amongst other places, they came to England, and bravely preached Christ throughout the northern and

[1] An old name for Ireland.

midland part of the country. Great success attended their labours, and Columba rejoiced in his quiet home over their faithful work.

When Columba was already growing old, it chanced that, far away in Rome, an archdeacon named Gregory saw some fair lads for sale in the market-place. "Who are these beautiful children?" he asked. He was told they were Angles, and they were heathen. "Not Angles, but angels," he said, struck with their loveliness, but he groaned to think that they were not Christians. He longed to send missionaries to their land. Soon afterwards he was made Bishop or Pope of Rome. The word Pope means Father, and the bishops of Rome were looked on as spiritual fathers, just as our bishops are spoken of as "Reverend Fathers in God." Now was his opportunity! He picked out a monk named Augustine, and sent him with a few other brethren to England. On their way their hearts failed them. Such terrible stories they heard of the fierce Angles! They wanted to return to their sunny Italy. But no! Gregory wrote to them that to begin a good thing and leave it off was worse than not to begin at all. Onwards then they went, crossed the Channel, and landed in Kent. Here they were cheered to find that King Ethelbert had married a Christian lady named Bertha; and at Dover, and elsewhere, they were surprised to see British Christian churches where the old British Christian worship was still kept up. Ethelbert became a Christian, and urged his subjects to follow his example. Everywhere Augustine gained converts; his mission spread. By and by he was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and there he founded the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, on the site where afterwards was reared the beautiful cathedral we now may see.

It would have been well if the two streams of Christianity, the northern and the southern, could have mingled their waters peacefully, but that was not to be.

A meeting was arranged between Augustine and his followers on the one side, and the Christians of the old British Church on the other. "How," asked the Britons of an old saint, "shall we know if these strangers are from God?" "If they are from God," was the answer, "they will be meek and lowly in heart." But when the northern

Christians approached Augustine, at the Oak Meadow, on the banks of the Severn, the proud man would not rise to meet them, and sat to receive them as if they were subjects rather than brethren. This was a bad beginning to the conference. "You should keep Easter on such a day," said Augustine. "Our Church has from ancient times kept it on such another day," said the Britons. "Your monks should cut their hair like a crown," said Augustine. "No," said the Britons; "our habit is to cut it like a crescent." "When you baptize a child," said Augustine, "you should dip him first on the right side, and then on the left side, and then the third time with his face downwards." "No," said the British Christians; "it is enough to dip him once, in the name of the Holy Trinity."

So the meeting ended, and nothing was settled. Both parties went off to work apart, according to their own notions.

Small points those seemed to quarrel about, but the British Christians felt that something more important was at stake. The question was, were they to remain free, or were they to become subject to an Italian bishop? They had not received their Christianity from Rome. Why should they bow to it now? In fact, those simple men on the banks of the Severn were the first Protestants, that is, the first to protest against the rising tyranny of the Popes.

But Gregory was a great and good man, and a thorough missionary in heart. We owe much to him, and also to Augustine, who, although perhaps overbearing and unwise in his anxiety to bring the British Church under the power of Rome, was a man of great ability and untiring missionary zeal. He only lived, however, seven years after his arrival in England, and his personal success scarcely extended beyond Kent, and the consecration of a Bishop in London.

One of Augustine's most successful followers was named Paulinus. He preached to a heathen king in Yorkshire, named Edwin. Said one of the monarch's followers, "Our life is as when a bird flutters into a brightly lighted hall, and quickly flutters out at the other end into the darkness. We come we know not whence, and we go we know not whither." "The more diligently I have sought the truth,"

said Coifi, the heathen priest, "the less I found it. Let us destroy our temples, and throw our idols into the river;" and so they did.

Edwin, with all his nobles and a large number of the people, were baptized in A.D. 627, and Paulinus became first Bishop of York. He is described as a man "tall of stature, a little stooping, his hair black, his visage meagre, his nose very slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and majestic."

A Saxon church was reared upon the site where now stands the glorious cathedral of York.

A few years later Edwin was killed, and Paulinus retreated to Kent, where he died as Bishop of Rochester.

There were two men whom we should not forget. Felix, a missionary of the Romish party, and Fursey, a missionary from Ireland, worked together, side by side, without quarrelling, though they kept Easter on different days, and cut their hair differently. All honour to them for showing how good and pleasant it is when brethren can dwell together in unity!

However, whether by Italians, Irish, or Welshmen, Christ was preached, and therein the English people had good reason to rejoice.

CHAPTER VII

FROM A.D. 827 TO A.D. 1017—EARLY ENGLISH KINGS.

EGBERT[1] was a great king, respected both at home and abroad. He and his descendants ruled over more or less of England from A.D. 827 to A.D. 1017. They must have been a short-lived race, as, during this period of 189 years, no less than fifteen kings succeeded each other. Three of these, however, came to a violent end: one dying in war; one murdered by a wicked stepmother, and one by a desperate robber. The whole period was often troubled by wars. The study of history should certainly make us thankful for the peace of our own days, and we may well take care that the bitterness of party strife does not light again the flames of civil conflict.

The men of the north of England at one time would fight against the men of the south; then both would join in war against the Scots, or against the old Britons in Wales and Cornwall. But soon this petty strife was arrested by the appearance of fresh enemies, the Danes.

The Danes were of the same race as the English, and came from the same original regions, the north of Germany, Sweden, and Denmark. They were the fiercest of all the tribes. It was said they would toss babies on their spears before the eyes of their mothers! Yet they were not wholly barbarous, and they had clever hands amongst them to build their ships, and clever heads to manage them.

It was a terrible thing for an English peasant, when, looking seaward, he spied the sails of their vessels, perhaps one or two hundred of them, hovering near the coast, like birds of prey! They came first, just as the English had done of old to the Britons, to steal their corn,

[1] The name Egbert means Eye-bright.

and take off their women and children as slaves. Then they came to settle; and at last they made a great effort to sweep over the whole land.

One man stood up, like a strong sea-wall, against them. That man was Alfred, who alone of all English sovereigns has won for ever the name of Great. Although he lived so long ago, his life is so fully recorded that we seem to see him pass through all its principal changes.

He was a grandson of Egbert, and the youngest and favourite child of Ethelwulf. When he was only five years old, his father took him to see his godfather, Leo IV., Pope of Rome, who was so delighted with him that he is said to have anointed him with oil as a future king. This he had no business to do, as it was the habit of the English to choose their own sovereigns, and no bishop, English or foreign, could do it for them. The young traveller returned safely home, and one day his mother, Osberga, entering the room where he and his brothers were at play, and holding up an illuminated book of Saxon songs, exclaimed, "Here, children, whichever of you learns first how to read shall have this volume!" Ethelbert and Ethelred cared little for such a promise. Reading, they thought, was more fit for priests than for princes. But Alfred thought otherwise. His mind was aroused. He felt instinctively that these songs would be a treasure to him. He set to work diligently, and soon deserved and received the promised reward. Little education had he beyond this. To ride, to shoot with bow and arrow, to wrestle, to hunt, were the accomplishments of those days, and in these he soon excelled. He paid a second visit to Rome, however, with his father, and on his return home met several learned men at the court of King Charles of France. We may picture him then as a brave and handsome young prince, popular amongst all people. He was something more. Partly, perhaps, through the influence of a pious relative named Neots, he had given his heart to God, whom it was his great desire to serve. He rose early in the morning to pray, and, when he found the passions of youth strong in him, he implored that sickness should be sent him rather than that he should be allowed to yield to temptation. God knows best what trials as well as what joys

are good for us, so we need not imitate his petition for any special trouble, but we see here the intensity of his piety. He wrote out a little manual, chiefly from the Psalms, which he kept always in his bosom, to be at hand as a friend and counsellor. He took his place humbly under his brother, King Ethelbert, and afterwards stood bravely by Ethelred when he succeeded to the throne and was attacked by the Danes. One day a great battle was impending. Alfred, whose habit it was to rise early like the lark, to offer his morning song of praise to God, was ready for the fight, but Ethelred lingered in his tent at prayer with a priest. Moments were precious. Alfred, "at the head of his men, with the rush of a wild boar," fell upon the enemy, fearless, for "he too relied on God." Soon young King Ethelred came to his support. The battle was terrible. Two Danish kings, five earls, and thousands of the enemy lay upon the plain. The brothers were victorious, and a day and a night the foe fled before them. But Ethelred was sorely wounded, and died soon afterwards, and Alfred was made king.

Truly, to become king of England in those days was like taking a ship's helm in the midst of a storm, but Alfred, though only twenty-three, did not shrink from the task. Nine battles had been fought that year, and many more had to be fought still. He proved himself a great general, bold, yet cautious, never attempting impossibilities, but never shirking a fair fight; quick as lightning in his movements, and never so to be dreaded as after a defeat.

But adversity fell upon him. The Danes came at an unexpected season. There was no army to meet them. Alfred had to fly, and remained many months in hiding in a little marshy island called Athelney,[1] accompanied by his good and true wife, Elswitha. So low had he fallen, that on one occasion we find him in the service of a peasant woman, who, led by an unmistakable smell of burning, comes in and rates him well for neglecting to turn her cakes! Alfred, with bowed head, deep in thought over his country's woes, had doubtless totally forgotten them. Another tale is very characteristic of him. Disguised

[1] Athelney, or the Noble's Island, is now a marshy tract in Somersetshire between the rivers Tone and Parret.

as a minstrel, he ventured into the Danish camp, to find out their plans, —perhaps he sang some of those songs he had learnt of old,—and the bold feat was successful. From that depth of adversity he rose once more; he reappeared amongst his people like a star emerging from a dark cloud.

Then followed a wise and careful reign. He made good laws; he passed the earliest of "compulsory education" decrees. He brought wise men from foreign parts to teach his people. He built many cities and forts: he formed a navy, and was the first to protect England with these wooden walls. He encouraged travellers, and listened with delight to the tales of those who had sailed towards the North Pole, and of Wulfstan, who had explored the Baltic Sea. He sent an embassy to India, with presents to the Christians there. He learnt Latin, and translated several works into English. He brought up his family well, in the fear of God, and as worthy princes. He was very jealous of his time, and carefully occupied every hour. All these labours he maintained in spite of never having good health. Like St. Paul, he had always "a thorn in the flesh," and was subject to attacks of excruciating pain.

The chief characteristic of his piety was an intense and deeply reverential love of God. "Drive away this mist," he wrote, "that now hangs before our mortal vision, and enlighten our eyes with Thy light. For Thou art the brightness of the true light. Thou art the soft rest of the just. All men tend to Thee."

We know few particulars of his death, but these are amongst his parting counsels to his son: "Thou, my dear son, set thee now here by me. I feel that my hour is coming. We must part. I shall to another world, and thou shalt be left in all my wealth. I pray thee, for thou art my dear child, strive to be a father and lord to thy people. Be thou the children's father and the widows' friend. Comfort thou the poor and shelter the weak; and with all thy might, right that which is wrong. And, son, govern thyself by law; then shall the Lord love thee, and God above all things shall be thy reward."

He died in the fifty-fourth year of his age, on the 26th of October A.D. 901.

Many other early English kings were remarkable men, such as his son Edward, Athelstan, and Edgar the Peaceful, whose boat was rowed by eight subject kings. But none of them equalled in merit and renown Alfred the Great, "England's darling, England's herdsman,[1] England's comfort."[2]

[1] *I.e.* he who cared for his people as a faithful herdsman for his flock.

[2] The following passages from the *Life of Alfred*, by T. Hughes, will, we are sure, be acceptable to the reader :—"Alfred had no settled home. We find him now in one country, now in another. . . . The ordinary houses of the Saxon nobles consisted of a large central hall, with chapel and rooms for the family attached, and outhouses for the servants and followers grouped round them. . . .The king's residence differed only in size from that of the nobility ; but Alfred must have needed much more room than any of his predecessors, as his court became very large. Foreigners of all nations flocked to it. The importance which he attached to the improvement of his own residence, and of the architecture of the churches and other buildings, is shown by the large proportion of his income devoted to building purposes. But the royal quarters were often rough places enough, as we know from the description of his most celebrated invention—the horn lantern. 'He made a vow to consecrate half of his time to God's service, and this, so far as his infirmity would allow, he performed with all his might by night and day. But inasmuch as he could not equally distinguish the length of the hours by night, on account of the darkness, and also oftentimes of the day, on account of the storms, he began to consider by what means, without any uncertainty, relying on the mercy of God, he might discharge the tenor of his vow till his death. After much thought, he hit on a shrewd invention. He commanded his chaplains to supply wax of sufficient quantity and quality to make six candles of equal length, so that each candle might have twelve divisions marked across it. Those six candles burned for twenty-four hours—a night and a day—without fail before the sacred relics which accompanied him. But sometimes they would not continue burning a whole day and night, from the violence of the wind which blew through the doors and windows, the fissures of the walls, or the thin canvas of the tents. The king considered by what means he should shut out the wind, and so by a useful and cunning invention he had a lantern beautifully constructed in wood and white oxhorn, which, when skilfully planed till it is thin, is no less transparent than a vessel of glass. By night a candle was put in it, which shone as brightly without as within, and was not extinguished by the wind, for the opening of the lantern was also closed up by the king's command by a door of horn.'"

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW OUR FOREFATHERS LIVED—DUNSTAN.

The early English (or Saxons, as they are often called) were classed under several different ranks. There was the king, head of all; then came the great earls and aldermen, who were almost like petty kings, and who governed large districts; then the thanes or landowners; then the freemen, who carried on trades, agriculture, and sometimes were in domestic service. Lowest of all was the large and miserable class of serfs or slaves. These unhappy creatures were treated much like cattle, and in one place are thus mentioned: "Let every man know his teams of men, horses, and oxen." But the clergy taught their owners to pity and set them free, and Alfred forbade that a Christian slave should be kept in bondage more than six years.[1] Every district was responsible for keeping order within its borders. Silver and gold were plentiful. The houses were rudely built, and therefore hangings, often richly embroidered, were hung along the walls to keep out the draughts. Ladies wore flowing robes, wisely unconfined at the waist. A national assembly met at uncertain times, when summoned by the king. It was called the Wittenagemote, or Meeting of Wise Men, or place of Great Thought. How much more beautiful a word than our name Parliament, which merely means a place for speech!

To the monks and clergy the people were largely indebted. It was they who had taught them Christianity. It was they who set them an example of careful tillage on their monastic lands. Within the monasteries dwelt quiet and learning, and there was a refuge for the weak when civil war raged around. But, admirable as it may be

[1] See Exod. xxi. 2.

for men and women to remain voluntarily unmarried for the sake of devoting their lives to good works, there is always danger when large numbers of persons bind themselves by oaths to remain single. To strain after a different standard than the Bible sets before us is apt to end in our falling far below its injunctions, and so we find that, very early, abuses came in amongst the monks and nuns.

The clergy were divided into *Regulars*, or those who submitted to monastic rule, and *Seculars* (or worldly), those who were not so attached. It began now to be the fashion to despise married clergymen, although St. Peter had a wife, and St. Paul claimed the right to have one if he pleased, and also recommended that a bishop should be the "husband of one wife" (1 Cor. ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 2, 12).

Towards the end of the seventh century, the customs of the old British Church gave way to those which were introduced by Augustine. This was greatly due to the action of a king and an archbishop. It so happened that a king named Oswy had been brought up under a British bishop; his queen was under the influence of Wilfred, of the opposite party. So it came to pass that, owing to the different calculations of Easter, while the queen and her maidens might be fasting, the king and his court were feasting. Oswy summoned a court to settle the question, and, being told that the Church of Rome was founded by Peter, who had authority to admit people into heaven, whereas the British Church was only founded by Columba, he decided in favour of the former. Had he been less ignorant of history, he might have replied that there was no certain proof that St. Peter ever went to Rome, much less that he was bishop there; and, had he known the Bible better, he could have said that Peter himself never assured any persons of salvation unless they repented of their sins, believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and were renewed by the Holy Ghost.[1] However, so it was settled, and by and by a very able Arch-

[1] See Acts iii. 12, 19. St. Peter is reported to have travelled eastward, preaching the gospel in Syria, Persia, and Babylon. We should therefore have expected his martyrdom to have occurred there, but he appears to have come to Rome towards the close of his life, and he may have suffered in that city. At the same time, it is difficult to reconcile this with the silence of St. Paul about him in his Second Epistle to Timothy. St. Paul was himself the chief founder of the Church in Rome.

bishop of Canterbury, Theodore by name, who had himself been brought up in customs like those of the old British, managed to blend the two churches pretty well together. Both were about equal as to purity of doctrine. In the course of the seven or eight centuries which had passed since the death of Christ, many superstitious ways and much false teaching had been introduced. The clergy, too, had begun to grow very arrogant, and to lord it even over their sovereigns.

Thus, in the reign of young Edwy, A.D. 955, a remarkable priest named Dunstan assumed great authority. The king, on his wedding day, left the banquet-hall, where doubtless noisy carousing was going on, and retired to his bride and her mother. The nobles wanted him back, and Dunstan undertook to bring him. The king refused to come, whereupon the irate priest insulted his mother-in-law, and dragged the monarch down. The king exiled him. The priests declared that the royal marriage was unlawful, the queen being some sort of cousin to Edwy. The Archbishop of Canterbury took the side of Dunstan against Edwy, both as to his marriage and also with regard to the marriage of priests, which the king favoured, and Dunstan determined to put down. The queen was cruelly treated; torn from her husband, branded in the face, and carried to Ireland. She was afterwards so severely tortured that she died; and Edwy, sorrow-stricken for the beautiful wife whom he had so dearly loved, soon died also.

Then Dunstan appeared in better colours. He supported the young King Edgar, and for many years governed England with a wise and firm hand. In him we see an early example of a political priest, with the virtues and vices of such a character. By such persons any amount of arrogance is considered becoming to their lofty position, and in the struggle with kings they often come off victorious.

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CHAPTER IX.

FROM A.D. 979 TO A.D. 1042—DANISH RULE.

As men sow, so they reap. This is true of nations as well as of individuals. In the reign of the English king Ethelred, a massacre of the Danes was planned and executed on St. Brice's day, the 3rd of November 1002. Multitudes were murdered, and amongst them the husband and son of Gunhilda, sister of Sweyn, King of Denmark. She, too, was afterwards slain, and as she died she cried aloud that vengeance would come upon the land for these bloody deeds. Vengeance came, and quickly! Soon the serpent-like, long black ships of the Danes were seen approaching our shores, the royal standard flying, on which a raven with outstretched plumage was portrayed, as if flapping its wings in token of victory. Sweyn landed, and ravaged the land from north to south, and, making his headquarters for a time at Bath, there received the homage of the people, Ethelred fled with his Norman wife, and Sweyn was acknowledged full King of England. He died suddenly, however, within a short time, and then Canute, his son, carried on a long combat, first with Ethelred, and afterwards with Edmund, his successor, surnamed Ironside on account of his great strength. But death, that often likes to strike down the strongest, soon laid Edmund low. With him ended the resistance of the English, and Canute became sole monarch of the land.

Canute early showed great ability, but a fierce temper inherited from his father broke out in his words and actions. "He who brings me the head of one of my enemies shall be dearer to me than a brother," was one of his sayings. He was suspected of having sent off the two little children of Edmund Ironside to Sweden to be

murdered, but they were passed on to Hungary, and there brought up in safety.

By and by a change came over this rough Northerner. It was such a change as when a hard black frost yields to the soft showers and sunshine of spring. Returning from a pilgrimage to Rome, he sent a letter before him to the English people, in which occur these words: "Be it known to you all that I have dedicated my life to God, to govern my kingdom with justice, to observe the right in all things. If in the time that is past, and in the violence and carelessness of my youth, I have violated justice, it is my intention, by the help of God, to make full compensation. Let those who are noble and those who are not equally obtain their rights according to the laws, from which no deviation shall be allowed for fear of me." He was true to his word. His rule was henceforth wise and just, and he thus won the affection of a people ever generously ready to forgive where repentance was real.

Like most sovereigns, Canute found himself surrounded by flatterers; but, unlike many, he did not enjoy their honeyed words, being well aware that "he that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet" (Prov. xxix. 5). It is related that, being one day at the seaside, he caused his throne to be placed on the shore, and then, with loud voice, commanded the waves not to presume to wet his royal robes. His courtiers stood around with astonishment and dismay as the waters came rippling up nearer and nearer to the feet of the king. Then, arising, Canute addressed them in some such words as these: "See how small is my power, and confess how God alone is great, who can say to the ocean, 'Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther,' and His voice will be obeyed."

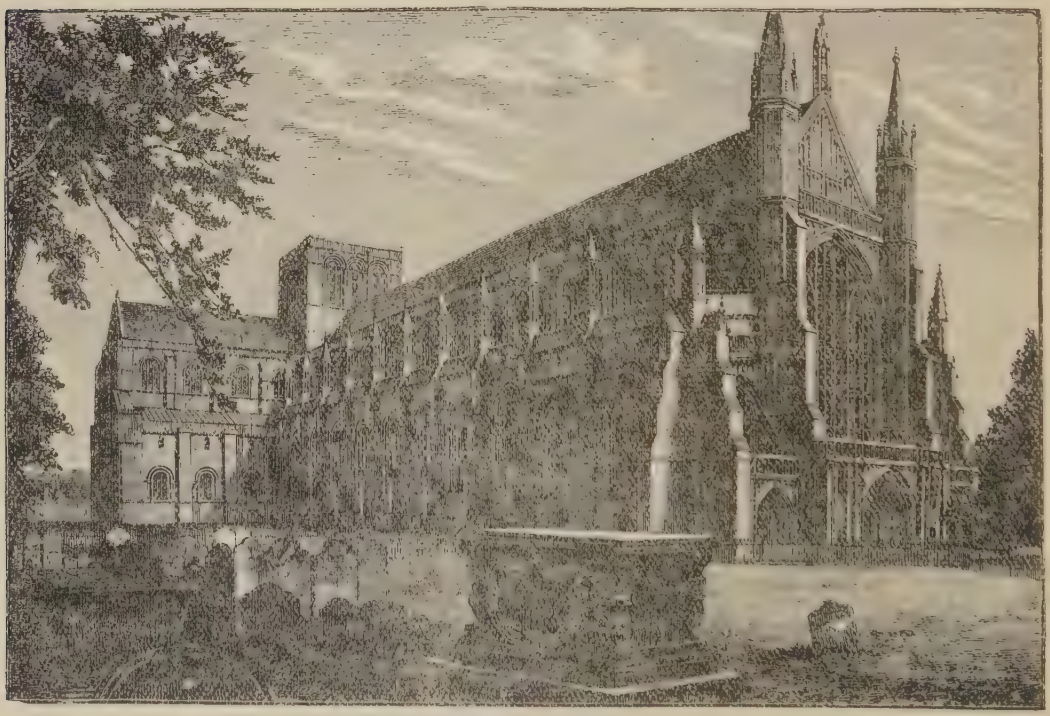
Canute was of a cheerful disposition, and had some taste for poetry. English peasants would long afterwards sing the simple verses which were suggested to him as he was rowing on the river Nene, near Ely, and heard the music of the monks floating over the waters,—

"Merrily sang the monks within Ely,
When Canute king rode thereby;
Row, my knights, row near the land,
And hear we these monks sing."

Whoever goes to Winchester may see in the grand old cathedral there three large painted chests. In one of these are the bones of Egbert, first king of all England ; in another those of Canute, the stranger-king, who learned to love the English, and whom the English loved.

Canute was succeeded by his son Harold Harefoot, a fierce, cruel man, after whose short reign his still more savage brother Hardacanute came to the throne. "Never was a bloodier deed done in the land since the Danes came," ran a popular song, than when Harold's men seized Alfred, a brother of Edmund Ironside, killed every tenth man among his followers, sold the rest for slaves, and had Alfred's eyes torn out at Ely. Hardacanute dug up his brother's body and flung it into a marsh. His death was brutal as his life, for "he died as he stood at his drink in the house of Osgod Clapa at Lambeth."

Happily for England, the reigns of these unworthy sons of the great Dane were short, and then, in 1042, the English Edward was summoned from across the Channel to ascend the throne of his forefathers.



WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

CHAPTER X.

A.D. 1042–1066—EDWARD THE CONFESSOR—GODWIN—HAROLD.

Was this indeed an Englishman, now landing on their shores, this "slight and shadow-like form, with delicate complexion and small, soft hands"? By birth and descent Edward was indeed English, but by education he was a Norman, while by character and tastes he was more suited to be a monk than a king, and would have been happier, perhaps, in a monastery than in a palace.

Though Normandy, or the Northmen's land, had been peopled by men of the same race as were the English, yet the Normans had become so influenced by southern ideas, ways, and speech, that they were far greater strangers in England than were the Danes. Edward, therefore, naturally felt lonely in the castle of Winchester, and surrounded himself with Norman favourites, who excited the jealousy of his English nobles. He was usually gentle, and truly deserved the name of Confessor from his open avowal of religious motives. He was stern on himself, for

"Of making excuses he was much ashamed."

He was not devoid of manly courage, and loved hunting, a dangerous pastime in those days. We are told that

"Each one who sees King Edward
Is more courteous when he leaves him;
Each one receives there, each one learns
Moderation, sense, and good manners."

The "manners" of the English were rough indeed, and certainly needed improving. This the Norman could do for them, but the

Norman sovereign had not strength to curb their spirits or to rule the land. Happily, these more royal tasks were ably performed by Godwin, the first English statesman who was not a priest.

Godwin was one of the many great Englishmen who have sprung from a low estate, for his father was a peasant. An accident brought him into the notice of the Danish kings, and his great abilities soon won him a high place. He married the sister or sister-in-law of Canute, and was given the earldom of Wessex, formerly a kingdom, and comprising what are now all the southern counties of our land. His qualities were such as Englishmen always value, courage, good common sense, eloquence, and patriotism.

While the great earl was occupied with affairs of State, Edward found a useful and congenial employment in causing a code of laws to be compiled, in which was condensed the wisdom of Alfred and his successors.

The people naturally wished their king to marry. He complied with their desire, and his bride was Edith, daughter of Godwin, a maiden so fair, discreet, and charming, that even the enemies of her father would say,—

> "As out of briars springs the rose,
> So from rough Godwin Edith grows."

It was scarcely a happy union, for Edward was more than forty, and had an idea that marriage lowered his religious standing. He seemed, also, as time went on, to extend to his wife the growing dislike he felt to his father-in-law. He disliked him as a shrinking, nervous man dislikes a bold, bluff person, as a weak man is apt to dislike a powerful character without whose support he knows he cannot stand, as a lover of priests and monks dislikes one who does not share, but who rather despises, these preferences. More than this, he never could or would shake off the suspicion that Godwin had a share in the murder of his brother, although he had been tried and acquitted of this by the Wittenagemote.[1] At last open feud broke out between the son and

[1] There were many versions of this sad story. The most tragic was, that his own mother had treacherously invited Prince Alfred to England, and that Godwin, after welcoming and feasting him, had connived at his imprisonment and murder. The truth may be that he

father-in-law, the subject and sovereign. The people of Dover refused to harbour a company of Edward's Norman visitors, and a fight ensued. Edward commanded Godwin to chastise the town. It was impossible for him to do this, and his reply was, "It ill becomes you to condemn without a hearing those whom you are called on to protect." Thereupon he was banished by Edward; but ere long he returned, and made a triumphal progress to London. The Normans fled at the sound of his name. Amongst the fugitives was Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, of whom it was reported that "had he said a black crow was white, Edward would have believed his word rather than his own eyes." He and the Bishop of London escaped in a small open fishing-boat to France. Godwin now resumed the reins of government, and foreigners were not again allowed to domineer over the English.

Soon afterwards, however, Edward at table once more insulted Godwin by a taunting reference to his supposed share in his brother's murder. The blood mounted to the old man's temples as he angrily defended himself. Some say that he exclaimed, "May this crumb choke me if I be guilty!" and that he instantly expired; but he appears rather to have been seized with a fit of apoplexy, and he died the following day.

Harold, his son, stepped into the vacant place, and, with talents equal to his father's, was less obnoxious to Edward. He built a beautiful church at Waltham in Essex, and no doubt sympathised with Edward's interest in his rising structure at Westminster.

The question now arose, "Who is to succeed Edward?" The nearest heir was a sickly boy of ten years of age. Another candidate was the king's cousin, William, Duke of Normandy. But the monarchs of England were usually elected by the Wittenagemote, and all knew well that that assembly would not choose a Norman prince. The hopes of the nation were fixed on Harold, who, although not of royal blood, had yet for thirteen years virtually governed the land.

welcomed him to England, but was disgusted with his Norman retinue, and failed to defend him when the cruel King Harold sent to seize him. It is well, however, to remember that defence, if made, would probably have been useless, as England was not ready for a revolution in Alfred's favour.

CHAPTER XI.

HAROLD AND WILLIAM THE NORMAN CONQUEROR, A.D. 1066.

HAROLD would have enjoyed his popularity more had not a cloud for some time hung over his life. On his way to visit his cousin William, Duke of Normandy, he was shipwrecked, and taken prisoner by Guy, Count of Ponthieu. He contrived to send tidings of his misfortune to William, who at once paid a heavy ransom for him, and received him kindly at his court, fêting him, and showing him every distinction. So far well; but when he wished to return home, he found, like a guest at an inn, that there was a bill to pay. William forced him, in the presence of the court, to take some kind of oath to him that he would marry his daughter, and that when Edward died he would acknowledge him as either the successor to the throne, or else, at least, as his overlord. What bitter feelings must have now arisen in Harold's heart! Better would it have been for him to die than to make any such oath, for he had no right or power to pledge away the freedom of England to a foreign lord; but life and liberty are sweet to a man in his prime, and Harold swore as was demanded of him.

Truly, to break an oath so made was less a crime than was that of the duke who insisted on its being taken.

Harold returned to England. The little princess whom he had promised to marry died. He became more and more deeply seated in the hearts of the people. Perhaps he hoped that sad promise of his might be forgotten, but William was not a man to let his debtor off "the pound of flesh" agreed upon.

The crisis came on.

Edward the Confessor lay dying, Edith, his queen, "nourishing

his cold feet in her bosom." Harold and Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, stood beside him. They asked who should succeed him, and in a clear voice he answered, "Harold, my brother." Soon afterwards he died, and was buried in his own shrine at Westminster and was honoured as one who, according to his own ideas of duty, had served God and man righteously.

Harold was elected without hesitation by the Wittenagemote. A few weeks of peace were all that he enjoyed. That which had twice before caused the ruin of England, namely, internal divisions, once again made it a prey to the invader. Harold's elder brother, the jealous Tostig, stirred up a war against him in Northumbria. Harold hastened to put down the revolt. Scarcely had he won the sorrowful victory of Stamford Bridge, where Tostig was slain, than he was obliged to hurry southwards again. For the dreaded intelligence reached him—William was come, and had landed unopposed!

Harold gathered his troops around him as rapidly as possible. His brave brothers, Gurth and Leofric, fought at his side. Every Englishman would have given his life twice over for him had that been possible. Then followed one of the most terrible battles of history, at Senlac, near Hastings. An old poem tells us how—

"King Harold, who soon advanced,
Who was the first to make the attack,
Pierced and put into disorder William's host,
As does a galley on the wave
When it goes sailing on the deep sea.
The king was quite the foremost,
For in the whole host he had not his peer."

At first the English were victorious, but the tide of battle turned. By a stratagem—

"The duke thinks that he can surround them.
So did he as if they were partridges.
Then began the fight hand to hand,
And the battle was cruel and fierce,
Many wounded and dead
Are there now on both sides.
The king, struck in the eye with a dart,
Falls, and soon is in evil case,
Perished, slain, and mangled;

And his standard is beaten down,
And the English host conquered.
And there was slain Earl Gurth, his brother,
And Earl Leofric; there were slain
Many English and Normans,
No one knows who or how many."[1]

When night came, William pitched his tent as conqueror in the midst of the battlefield. When Harold's mangled body was discovered, it was wrapped in a purple mantle and buried beneath a heap of stones. A few days later William was crowned at Westminster, the words of the service having to be repeated in French as well as English. While the ceremony was going on, a quarrel arose outside between the English and Normans. Shouts and cries of "Fire! fire!" resounded. Then William greatly trembled. Perhaps at that moment he felt how criminal it was, by sword and bloodshed, to have forced himself upon an unwilling nation. He had indeed applied to the Pope to sanction his claim, and had received his benediction; but there are times when no voice of man can hush the accusing voice of conscience in the soul, for is it not "the still, small voice of God Himself"?

William desired to govern England well. He tried to learn the English language, and wished to gain the love of the people, but this was impossible. They never forgave him the death of Harold. Revolt broke out in place after place. Then he made a terrible march through the land from south to north, devastating the country to such an extent that a severe famine followed—so severe that fathers were said to have devoured their own children in the agony of starvation.

At last the whole kingdom lay subdued and prostrate under William's heavy hand. No one dared any more to oppose him. He summoned a great assembly on Salisbury Plain, and all men swore allegiance to him. He had got what he wanted. He was the Conqueror and the King of England.

[1] Old Saxon poem.

CHAPTER XII.

NORMAN RULE—WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, A.D. 1066—WILLIAM THE RED, 1087—HENRY I., 1100—STEPHEN, 1135.

William wished to be regarded as an English king, and to rule the land according to the laws compiled by Edward the Confessor. To these he added some of the regulations of what is called the Feudal System, or system of mutual obligations, which bound men to men throughout the different classes of society. Thus, "a tenant became the man of the lord from whom he held his land," and all the lords held their estates from the king. Sometimes a beautiful spirit of self-sacrifice sprang up between a tenant and his lord, for whom he would readily die, and whom sometimes he scarcely cared to survive. But unfortunately, while tenants might be attached to their lords, both men and masters often hated and warred against everybody else, so that, in the end, a narrow, bad spirit grew up in the land, and became a great evil.

William caused a great survey to be made of all England, and it was so carefully carried out, that people said every single ox, cow, and pig was set down in it! Some say that men called the volume in which it was written Domesday Book, because it reminded them of that great future day when God shall judge the secrets of men and pronounce their everlasting doom. In Domesday Book is recorded one of his own most cruel acts. He loved hunting passionately, and laid waste a large tract of country (ninety miles, it is said), causing towns, churches, and manor-houses to be pulled down, in order to make to himself the grand hunting-ground of the New Forest. "He loved the deer as if he were their father, and commanded that whoso slew one of them should be deprived of his eyesight." Stern and

hard he was to any one who crossed his will. Even the great Pope Hildebrand could not have his own way with him. He required from William payment of "Peter's Pence," originally a voluntary donation, and likewise insisted that the king should do homage to him. William answered that he would send the money, as others had done so before him, but as to acknowledging the Pope as his superior, that he would not do, nor would he allow any Pope to be recognised as such in England without his consent!

But this great Conqueror could not rule his own sons. Robert, the eldest, desired to be put in possession of the dukedom of Normandy at once, instead of waiting to succeed at his father's death. William replied that "he was not in the habit of taking off his clothes before he went to bed!" The King of France took Robert's side, and father and son were soon arrayed in fight against each other. Robert once nearly killed his father, but, struck with horror on recognising him, cried for pardon, but cried in vain. William refused to forgive him.

Towards the end of August 1087, "while the crops were yet in the fields, the clusters on the vines, and the apples on the trees, William began to ravage the pleasant land of Maine in France." He came to Mantes. He fired the town, and burned houses and churches alike. As he cheered on his men, his horse stumbled over the smouldering ashes, and William fell, receiving an injury from which he died. In the lingering agony of his last days, he who had never shown pity to men implored mercy from God, while he trembled with remorse as all his cruel deeds came up to his recollection. Every one forsook him, and the unloved monarch died alone. Some ruthless hand actually stripped his corpse, and when it was afterwards carried to the grave, a man stood forth and denied the right to lay him in the spot chosen, of which he declared that he had been unjustly deprived.

Thus ended the reign of the first Norman king, and men exclaimed, "Well-a-day! that any man should lift himself so high above his fellows, and be so stark and stern!"

But Englishmen may have wished him alive again when they found themselves the subjects of his son, William the Red (so called from the colour of his hair), for he was one who neither loved nor

feared either God or man. When reminded of a vow he had made during sickness to rule justly, he exclaimed, "Who ever kept all his promises?" When urged not to cross the Channel to Normandy during a fierce storm, he shouted, "Who ever knew a king drown?" He cared for nothing but money, which he wrung from the people by all sorts of devices. One gentle, holy man strove to check his cruelty to the English, Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, but with little success. Death found William in the fatal New Forest, where a brother of his named Richard had already perished. He was killed by an arrow, perhaps shot accidentally.

His brother Henry succeeded him, a worthier man and a wiser king than he. He gave the people a "Charter," or declaration of their rights, and he won their hearts by choosing an English bride, Edith, daughter of the King of Scotland, but descended on her mother's side from the old English line of kings. Three children sprang from this marriage—one son and two daughters. This young prince and one of his sisters were drowned in the English Channel when crossing from Normandy. The day was calm and clear, but the sailors had drunk deep of Norman wine. The vessel was mismanaged. A wild cry was heard. The *White Ship* had struck on a rock, and all but one man perished. Henry was said never to smile again after this loss.[1] He left his daughter Matilda, widow of the Emperor of Germany, heiress to the crown; but she was proud and scornful, so the nation chose in her stead Stephen, Count of Blois, a grandson of the Conqueror, whose handsome face and winning ways captivated them. He proved, however, very unfit to rule, and on his death was succeeded by Henry, Duke of Anjou, son of Matilda.

[1] This is the subject of one of Mrs. Hemans' most touching poems, of which the following is the first verse:—

"The bark that held a prince went down,
The sweeping waves rolled on;
And what was England's glorious crown
To him that wept a son?
He lived—for life may long be borne
Ere sorrow breaks its chain;
Why comes not death to those that mourn?
He never smiled again!"

CHAPTER XIII.

HENRY II., A.D. 1154—RICHARD I., 1189—GROWTH OF THE NATION—THE CRUSADES.

THE reign of Henry II. was a very remarkable one. Throughout it, and indeed throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the English nation was rapidly growing and consolidating itself. There was no longer any fear of England becoming merely a greater Normandy, although little boys were still taught in French at school; and if a man were caught thieving, his case would be tried at court in the same language. The Normans, on the contrary, were becoming English.

But the growth of a nation is not like that of an individual, who need not "take thought for his stature." Every step in the advance of a nation is won through suffering and conflict; the interests of one class often seeming to clash with those of another, both having to make concessions to each other, till at last the rights of all are carefully balanced, and the system of government becomes like a perfect, though complicated, piece of machinery, which certainly should not be carelessly meddled with.

Henry found several difficult questions disturbing the country, which only time and long experience could settle.

What were the rights of the king? What were the rights of the nobles? What were the rights of the Pope, then the acknowledged head of the Church?

The nobles had become very independent. In the time of Stephen hundreds of castles had been built, and filled, as it was said, *with devils*, so cruelly did many of the lords exercise then their too unrestricted power. Henry soon put them down, and destroyed many of their strongholds.

He had a harder task in his dealings with the Church. He had raised to the chancellorship a young man named Thomas Becket, son of a London citizen, whose handsome face and figure and great talents, combined with some fortunate circumstances, had brought him into prominence. Henry loved him so much that he seemed to all men "like the king's second self." He made him Archbishop of Canterbury, when that office, the highest in the land, became vacant. But a change came over their relations to each other. Thomas Becket now considered himself a greater man than Henry, for he held that his spiritual office was far higher than that of any monarch. "Do not threaten," once said an ecclesiastic, "for we are of a court which is accustomed to give command to emperors!"

Henry caused the "Constitutions of Clarendon" to be passed, which ordained that criminal priests should be subject to the common law of the land. Becket opposed this, and maintained that every priest or clerk, or any one belonging in any way to the Church, should only be punished by his superiors in the Church. Numbers of worthless people, therefore, professed to join the Church, to escape the common law. "It was said that more than a hundred murders had been committed by clerks since the beginning of Henry's reign."

The king and priest each thought the right on his side. The king felt that he ought to rule the land. The priest considered that, as the Pope's representative, the king should yield to him. We constantly in history find people acting conscientiously in opposite ways. For many years this conflict went on. Becket was provoking; Henry was passionate. Becket fled to France, and there met the Pope, from whom he expected sympathy and aid. But he was disappointed, for the Pontiff did not wish to offend Henry, and so proved a lukewarm ally to Becket. "I know not how it is," said the angry archbishop, "that at the court of Rome the Lord's side is always sacrificed!"

At last Becket returned to England, and a reconciliation was supposed to have taken place between him and Henry. But the causes of quarrel remained, and soon Becket's arrogant conduct provoked the incensed monarch to the utterance of hasty words which

led to the brutal murder of Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. Bitterly Henry regretted this, and performed penance at the victim's tomb. No doubt Becket was truly a martyr, but he was so to a perverted conception of duty.

Henry became one of the greatest sovereigns of Europe. He conquered Ireland, and held the King of Scotland in check. He ruled over a larger part of France than did the French king. But his reign, which began like the morning of a brilliant summer day, closed in gloom. His four sons, whom he dearly loved, rebelled against him. They hunted him from place to place. His good fortune seemed to forsake him in his old age. When he heard that his favourite son John had joined the rebels, he turned his face to the wall, and said, "I have nothing left to care for! Let all things go their way!" He was carried in a litter to Chinon, chafing under the shame of defeat, and of his wounded love. At his own desire, he was laid before the altar of the castle chapel, and there he died.

Never was there a more striking example of the uselessness of power over others, if a man cannot control his own passions.

His successor, Richard I., stung with remorse for his unnatural conduct to his father, joined in the Crusades, or Wars of the Cross, undertaken to rescue Jerusalem from the Mahometans. The first of these had been aroused by the entreaties of Peter the Hermit, who had returned from a visit to the Holy Land. Mounted on a mule, with a crucifix in his hand, his head uncovered, his body girded with a thick cord, he travelled from place to place, urging Christians to rescue the holy places from the infidels. Multitudes—men, women, and even children—streamed southwards in obedience to his call, but perished miserably from want and sickness without even reaching Palestine. A chosen band, under a noble leader named Godfrey de Bouillon, were more successful. They approached the Holy City.

"'Jerusalem! Jerusalem!' they cry.
'Behold Jerusalem, enthroned on high.'"

They took the city, and Godfrey was elected king over it.

Richard the Lion-hearted fought valiantly against the Saracens,

but, like his father, he had no rule over his temper, and made enemies wherever he went. Being seized with fever, brought on by the heat of the climate, he was carried on a mattress to the front of the army, to superintend the siege of Acre. His foe, Saladin, generously sent him grapes and pears to soothe his thirst. He recovered, and after three years the town surrendered to him. He pushed on southwards as far as Ramleh, but, finding Jerusalem strongly defended, he unwillingly gave up the hopes of taking it. While riding out with a party of knights, one called out to him, "This way, my lord, and you will see Jerusalem." "Alas!" said Richard, hiding his face with his mantle, "those who are not worthy to win the Holy City are not worthy to behold it." Reports from England now made him anxious to return thither, but on his way home he was thrown into prison by the Duke of Austria, and his false brother John tried to prevent his ransom. But the English people gladly raised a large sum to free him. He returned home; reigned only long enough to show that his ruling passions were a love of money and of fighting, and died in 1199.

CHAPTER XIV.

A.D. 1199–1216—KING JOHN, THE POPE, AND THE BARONS.

John, who had fought against his own father, and had proved a traitor to his brother Richard, now had the opportunity of showing himself equally worthless as a king. He was perhaps the worst man who ever sat on the English throne!

There is hardly a doubt that he caused his young nephew Arthur to be murdered, and he kept his beautiful niece Eleanor a prisoner for many years. It was his fashion to seize the children of any nobles of whose attachment to himself he doubted, and to keep them as hostages. In this way he sent to the wife of William de Broese, to demand her children. She replied that "he had not taken such care of his own nephew as to make her trust her son in his company." She and her husband then fled with them to Ireland; but two years later John travelled thither, seized the lady and her children, sent them to Corfe Castle, and there caused them to be starved to death! Two-and-twenty knights shared a similar fate in the same fortress.

Although he had been ten years married to a worthy lady, Isabel, grand-daughter of the Duke of Gloucester, he took forcible possession of Isabella, the affianced bride of the Count de la Marche.

England was indeed to be pitied under the rule of such a monster; but the darkest day precedes the dawn, and so it proved.

John found his first enemy in Pope Innocent III., who threatened him with an interdict, not on account of his crimes, but because he refused to acknowledge the right of the Roman Pontiff to appoint an Archbishop of Canterbury. His subjects would have supported him in such a contest, had he not disgusted them by his shameless cruelty.

At first John laughed at the Pope's interdict. What did he care for churches being closed, and almost all religious services being forbidden? Pointing to a fat deer in the chase, he laughingly said, "Here is a fellow who has prospered well without ever hearing matins or vespers." But the irreligious are usually superstitious, and John became mortally alarmed when a hermit, named Peter of Wakefield, told him that he should not wear his crown longer than Ascension Day. On the eve of that day, May 15, 1213, he went early to the Templars' Church in Dover, and caused these extraordinary words to be read to the people: "Ye know that we have deeply offended our Mother the Church, and that it will be hard to draw on us the mercy of Heaven. Therefore we would humble ourselves, and of our free will, by the consent of our barons and high justiciaries, we give and confer on God, on the holy Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, on our Mother the Church, and on Pope Innocent III. and his Catholic successors, the whole kingdom of England and Ireland, with all their rights and dependencies, for the remission of our sins; henceforth we hold them as a fief, and in token thereof we swear allegiance, and pay homage in presence of Pandulfo, legate of the Holy See."

The legate then seated himself in the throne, while the king knelt to him and laid the crown at his feet.[1]

John now became a favoured vassal of the Pope, who at once sent orders to the King of France to withdraw the army which he had before bidden him send to invade England. But the young French prince, to whom the Pope had offered our land, refused to give up so tempting a prize.

The barons were at first stunned by these strange proceedings, but their mistrust of their base monarch was too deep to be put off by a Pope's words. They rallied against John. Thereupon the Pope transferred to them the displeasure of which their king had been the object. Happily, even the clergy of England would not give up their rightful demands.

Stephen Langton, a pious and learned man, had been appointed

[1] Having survived Ascension Day, John caused the unfortunate hermit and his son to be dragged at the tails of horses and then hung.

Archbishop of Canterbury. There was no love lost between him and John, who had refused at first to acknowledge him as Primate. Langton boldly espoused the cause of the people, and urged his monarch to yield to their just demands.

John was compelled to meet his barons in a beautiful meadow on the banks of the Thames, between Staines and Windsor, called from that time forth Runnymede, or "the meadow of council." Here he was obliged to sign the Magna Charta, or Great Charter of Rights, which laid the foundations of English liberty.

Scarcely had he signed it, before he plotted to free himself from his engagements, and gathered an army together to fight his nobles; but in crossing the Wash, a large bay on the east coast of England, the tide overtook his followers, and carried off the crown, along with a long train of treasures and provisions.

John, angry and distressed, comforted himself, it is said, by feasting on peaches and ale. A fever overtook him, and he died, committing his unworthy soul to God and St. Wulfstan. This occurred on the 19th of October 1216, when he was forty-nine years of age.

KING JOHN SIGNING MAGNA CHARTA.

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CHAPTER XV.

HENRY III., A.D. 1216–1272—THE KING AND THE BARONS' WAR.

All Englishmen must have looked kindly on John's little son Henry, only ten years old when he was hastily crowned in Gloucester Cathedral, immediately after his father's death. A wise and good man, the Earl of Pembroke, was appointed to take charge of him and of England, but he died in about two years' time. Another good and honest man, Hubert de Burgh, succeeded to the anxious charge. He had distinguished himself by gaining a great victory over the French at sea. For eight years he honourably ruled the land. Louis, the French prince, tempted him first with magnificent offers, and then with threats, to cease from opposing him, but Hubert remained faithful to his boy king.

Most unworthily did Henry repay this faithful subject when he came to man's estate.

His first acts were of evil omen. He proclaimed that no regulations passed during his minority were to be held as binding unless he ratified them. He quarrelled with Hubert de Burgh, deprived him of all his property, and caused him to be imprisoned. A blacksmith was ordered to make manacles for him. The man had a nobler heart than had his sovereign. "I would rather die," he said, "than make fetters to bind the man who conquered the French and has defended England."

Henry appeared to have two leading principles, one that he was a vassal of the Pope, and the other that, with that exception, he ought always to have his own way. The rights claimed by others he seemed to think would be wrongs to himself. Four times over he was made to sign the Magna Charta. Twice the Pope set him free from his oaths! How impossible was it that there should be any peace in the

country when an outside power could thus set a sovereign free from his most solemn obligations!

The barons found a worthy champion, strange to say, in the king's own brother-in-law, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. Though a Frenchman by birth, he was in heart and soul an Englishman. At first the king had favoured Simon, and had allowed him to marry his sister Eleanor, who was devotedly attached to him. But he afterwards took a dislike to the good earl, perhaps from jealousy of his influence, for Simon was handsome, brave, and clever, and became the favourite of the people. He and Eleanor had to make a hasty retreat to France after an outburst of the king's anger. He was appointed governor of Gascony, a province then belonging to England in the south of France. The peasantry were very troublesome, and Simon spent much time and money in subduing them. When he asked repayment from his sovereign, Henry exclaimed, "I am not bound to pay debts to a traitor!" "Were you not a king, you should have to answer for this," replied Simon. When a thunderstorm once forced the king to take shelter, Simon assured him that the tempest was passing away, and there was nothing to fear. "I fear thunder and lightning not a little, Earl Simon," said Henry; "but I fear you more than all the thunder and lightning in the world."

The king's unsatisfactory conduct drove the barons into an actual war with him, which lasted ten years. Shy of trusting their cause to one of foreign birth, they for a time hung back from Simon's aid. But they could not do without him. He won a great victory over the king at Lewes, in May 1246. In the following year he summoned a Parliament at Westminster, which marked an era in our constitution. For to it the earl summoned not only knights, but also two citizens from every borough. Ultimately it was decided to refer their quarrel with Henry to the King of France as umpire, who judged that Henry was bound to act in accordance with Magna Carta, but required the barons to withdraw their other claims. This they refused to do. The citizens of London rang their bells, and gathered again to the fight. Prince Edward, who had for a time upheld the cause of the barons, flew to rescue his father, whom Simon had taken prisoner, and

to revenge his mother, whom the Londoners hated, and had grievously insulted. Simon's own sons lost a battle, and thus exposed him to Prince Edward's full force.

When the earl heard that troops were seen approaching, he cried out with joy, "It is my son." Another minute, and he saw that the ensigns of young Simon floated in hostile hands, a bitter proof of the fate of his friends, and a warning of his own. Straight in front of him, about a mile distant, he looked upon the slopes of a green hill, glistening with the weapons of those who were thirsting for his blood. A little to the right, over the shoulder of the hill, his eye followed the course of the winding stream towards the place where his home lay. Between him and the hill lay a small plain, over which he would have to pass to his death. "May the Lord have mercy upon our souls," he said, "for our bodies are Prince Edward's!"

He tried to persuade his eldest son Henry and others to fly, but they would not desert him. "Come then," he said, "let us die like men; for we have fasted here, and we shall breakfast in heaven!" Struck with admiration at the fair array of the prince's troop, he exclaimed, "They come on well: they learnt that, not of themselves, but of me." His eldest son was the first to fall. "Is it so?" he exclaimed; "then indeed is it time for me to die." A few seconds, and he too fell, with the words "*Dieu merci*," "Thank God," on his lips.

Thus perished one whom the nation adored as their patriot leader. Although possibly some personal feelings of anger and ambition may have tinged his life, yet on the whole he was a great and noble man, and worthy of the people's affection. They even reverenced him after his death as a saint, and many a legend was told of miracles supposed to be wrought at his tomb.

Henry passed the closing years of his life in peace after this great victory won by his son at Evesham.

Although a bad king, he was a worthy man in private life, a faithful husband, an affectionate father. He was also a patron of art. He demolished the abbey built by Edward the Confessor, and replaced it by the beautiful edifice which may be seen to-day.

CHAPTER XVI.

EDWARD I., A.D. 1272—EDWARD II., 1307.

It is refreshing to pass from the reigns of the cruel John and the inconstant Henry III. to that of Edward I., who was a great and good ruler, and whose favourite motto was, "Keep your covenant." If there had been progress in England during the last century, it had been as a stormy spring, amidst bitter winds of adversity and few gleams of brightness. But now the land enjoyed what it so deeply needed, a healing season of sunshine and peace. For seventeen years there was quiet in the land, scarcely broken by rapid and successful wars over the border with the Welsh. "Our lord, King Edward," we read, "had great desire to redress the state of the realm in such things as required amendment." "I hold an office," he said, "and that office has its duties; let me look to it that they are rightly performed." Although he had so decidedly overcome the barons at Evesham, he had no wish to oppress them, and freely yielded them all the advantages of the Magna Charta. He cared little for show, and strove to avoid debt; yet on rightful occasions he pleased the people by right royal pageants. On his accession, a great feast was held which lasted a fortnight. The nobles made the conduits overflow with wine. The principal items for one day's fare were 300 oxen, 430 sheep, 450 pigs, 10 wild boars, 278 flitches, and nearly 20,000 fowls! On the marriage of his daughter, as many as 420 minstrels were present, and the bridegroom distributed about £400 among them. Edward cared little for fine clothes for himself. "What good," said he, "would they do me?" But to his beloved wife Eleanor he made choice presents, as of a cup of gold on New Year's Day, A.D. 1286,

worth £23, 6s. 8d.; and at another time of a pitcher of gold set with precious stones. Sometimes he was passionate, and, finding that on one such occasion he had done an attendant wrong, he fined himself about £200, which were duly paid to the aggrieved person. He loved to forgive any injury to himself, and understood what real forgiveness implies—a renewal of hearty friendliness. "MAY show mercy!" he once exclaimed. "Why, I will do that for a dog if he seeks my grace."

The Welsh war arose from the refusal of the Prince Llewellyn to pay homage to Edward at Shrewsbury. After being summoned in vain a third time, the English king invaded Wales, and soon subdued the prince. Llewellyn begged forgiveness, and it was granted at once. He was engaged to be married to Eleanor, daughter of Simon de Montfort; but she had been taken prisoner by the English, and Edward had sent her to his own Queen Eleanor[1] to be taken care of. Now she was summoned thence, and Edward himself was present at her marriage in Worcester Cathedral. Unhappily, instigated by an unwise brother, Llewellyn did not keep his treaty with Edward. This was a fault which the truth-loving king could not forgive. Llewellyn and his brother were slain in battle. Queen Eleanor, who always accompanied her husband in his wars, gave birth to a son in Carnarvon Castle. Edward joyfully presented him to the Welsh people as a prince who was truly Welsh, and could neither speak nor understand a word of English. Alas! had he known the future in store for that poor child, he would have wept rather than rejoiced.

Edward's happy days were not to last always. The Scots appealed to him, on the death of Alexander, to decide between the rival claims of Baliol and Bruce. Edward decided in favour of the former as being descended from the elder branch of the royal family, and followed up his judgment by insisting that the acknowledgment of fealty, which had for some time past been rendered by the Scots to the English

[1] The name Eleanor appears to have been a favourite one in the royal families of the time; thus there were five of note: Eleanor of Acquitaine, wife of Henry II.; Eleanor of Castille, wife of Edward; Eleanor of Provence; Eleanor, daughter of Simon de Montfort; and Eleanor, sister of Arthur, called the Fair Maid of Brittany.

king, should henceforth be no mere form. The Scots angrily resented this; and, unfortunately for their cause, they put Edward somewhat in the right by making a ravaging incursion into the north of England. "Now, blessed be God," said Edward, "who hath up to this time preserved our hands blameless! But now, since they themselves have entered our realm in hostile array, we will return the mischief upon their heads." He carried his victorious army as far as Edinburgh and Stirling. Wallace, a brave but cruel patriot, opposed him in vain, and was condemned to death. His head, crowned in mockery with a circlet of laurel, was placed upon London Bridge.

Edward fared like a common soldier in war, sleeping upon the ground, with his shield for his pillow and his horse for his companion.

Once in Wales he chanced to be cut off with a few of his followers from the main body of the army. There was not bread enough for their wants, and water mixed with honey was their only drink. A single keg of wine was discovered, which the soldiers wished to be kept for the king's use. "No," said Edward, "we will all fare alike till God shall give us release. I who have led you into this difficulty will know no preference."

In 1290, Edward lost his beloved Queen Eleanor, the partner of his joys and sorrows for nearly thirty-five years. She died at Lincoln, whence he accompanied her body in slow and solemn procession of ten days to London. Wherever the corpse rested on the way, he caused a beautiful cross to be erected. There were thirteen of these touching memorials, of which those of Northampton and Waltham alone remain.[1] Nine years afterwards he married a French princess, who also was devoted to him, and whom he tenderly loved.

"And when the king heard say she had so well faren,
Thither he went away to see her and her bairn.
. . . . . .
The queen with her son at Cawood leaves he;
To them on the Ouse, full often came he."

[1] The most celebrated of these was that at Charing Cross by Cavalini, which was unfortunately destroyed by an ignorant mob as a relic of Popery. The reign of Edward I. was the period of transition from the Early English to the Decorated style; for instance, the Eleanor crosses, erected between 1290 and 1300, and the style of which is clearly Decorated.—See Rickman's *Gothic Architecture.*

But in the evening of his days another war with Scotland sorely tried Edward. To win the Pope's support, the Scotch offered to become vassals to him. The Pope, well pleased, interfered on their behalf, and charged Edward not to invade Scotland. The French, as usual, took the opportunity to declare war also against him. Edward, who had always striven to avoid overtaxing the people, was now compelled to appeal to them for large grants of money to carry on the war. Although they would have bewailed the loss of any provinces still annexed to England in France, they grudged their money for the struggle. Edward was obliged to plead his case before the Commons. He told them that the war was a dire necessity, and that his sole object was to save the land from ruin. "And now," he added, with tears, "I am going once more to face danger for England's sake. If I return, receive me again as you have received me to-day, and I will make you full amends. If not, here is my son. Place him on my throne, and his gratitude will reward your fidelity."

This great, true-hearted English king died in July 1307, in the thirty-fifth year of his reign, on his way to Scotland, with which he was again at war.

Edward II., who succeeded him, wasted away the love England was ready to give him for his father's sake, by his unwise devotion to unworthy favourites.

In his reign the Scotch won back their independence at the fierce battle of Bannockburn, in June 1314.

Edward was cursed with a wicked French wife, who plotted against him, caused his deposition, and ultimately his death, while she tried to rule the land along with her vile favourite Mortimer.

CHAPTER XVII.

EDWARD III., A.D. 1327–1377—WARS WITH SCOTLAND AND FRANCE.

EDWARD III. was a born soldier. He began his campaigning early. His mother's favourite, Mortimer, took him, soon after his accession, when only fourteen, to fight the Scots. The boy-king was nominally in command of the troops, and experienced some rough work. One night Earl Douglas crossed the river Tyne, stole upon the English camp, and slew the out-watchers, charging into the midst of the sleeping army with shouts, "A Douglas! A Douglas! Die, ye English thieves!" Three hundred men were slaughtered in their sleep, and Douglas made for the tent of the young king, the ropes of which he cut with his own hand before he galloped off safe in the darkness and confusion.

Edward's whole life was in keeping with this beginning.

On the 24th of January 1328, when only sixteen, Edward married Philippa, aged seventeen, daughter of the Count of Hainault, and in the following year the young couple rejoiced over their first-born child, Edward, known in history as the Black Prince, from the colour, perhaps, of the armour he wore.

Edward III. determined now to get rid of Mortimer, under whom he had been kept in humiliating subjection. The nobles gladly aided him, and in spite of the queen-mother's piercing cries, "Fair son, fair son, oh, spare the gentle Mortimer!" the guilty favourite was slain.

In 1333, Edward invaded Scotland, and won the battle of Halidon Hill, near Berwick, when 30,000 Scots were slain.

Five times over he invaded France, inflicting terrible suffering on that country, and gaining no real benefit for England. On the 26th

of August 1346 he won the battle of Cressy, in the north of France. His army was not more than a third in number to that of the French, but he handled them with great skill, and also had wisely secured for them rest and food before the battle began. King Philip, his opponent, on the contrary, hurried on his soldiers impatiently when they were tired by a rapid march. The rain came down in torrents, drenching their arrows, and when the sky cleared, the sun shone in their eyes, bewildering their aim. Amongst the French troops were a large company of Genoese bowmen. Seeing them waver, Philip in fury shouted, "Slay me those runaway scoundrels!" and the unfortunate foreigners were thus struck down by both French and English alike. Meanwhile the Earl of Arundel came to Edward, begging him to send help to the Prince of Wales. "Is my son killed?" asked the king. "No," said the messenger. "Is he wounded?" "No, sire." "Then tell those that sent you that he shall have no help from me. *Let the boy win his spurs!*"

The boy, who was only fifteen, did indeed win his spurs that day, for the honour of the victory was allowed to be his. Some years later, the Black Prince gained a still more honourable battle, that of Poictiers, in which the Frenchmen fought like heroes, although they lost the day, and their King John was taken prisoner to England.

Edward III. was as successful by sea as by land. He won two great naval fights, one over the French at Sluys in 1340, and one over the Spaniards in 1350. At the first, the number of ships opposed to him was so great that every one thought it was madness to attack them. But Edward only flew into a rage, and said, "I shall go. Those who are afraid where no fear is may stay at home!" Fortune favoured the brave. He lost only two ships; but out of the great French fleet only a few stragglers escaped. In 1350 the Spaniards invaded England. They advanced across the Channel to meet Edward, "who sat in a black velvet jacket, and a beaver hat, which became him well, listening to the music of his minstrels, but ever and anon looking out for the enemy." "I see a ship," shouted the man on the watch. "I see two, three, four of them!" and again, "God

help me! I see so many I cannot count them!" Then the English ships grappled with the immense Spanish vessels, and by dint of marvellous heroism won the day. Well did Edward deserve the name given to him, King of the Sea.

But no story of those heroic days is more touching than that of the six burgesses of Calais, who gave themselves up willingly to King Edward to die, as on that condition alone would he spare their town. "I have great hopes," said Eustace de St. Pierre, the first who stood forth, "of the mercy of God, if I die for the people." Edward was bent on their destruction, but he yielded at last to the prayers and tears of his wife, Queen Philippa, as she threw herself at his feet to intercede for them.

All these victories were of little good. The Black Prince died young. The French king regained what he had lost. Still for a time England was in a heyday of gaiety. "It seemed to the nation as if a new sun had arisen in the abundance of peace, plenty, and glory of victories. There was no woman who had not garments, furs, feather-beds, and utensils from the spoils of foreign towns, and then began English matrons to glorify themselves after the manner of the matrons of Gaul." Tournaments or mock fights took place continually. The king and all ranks of men indulged in extravagances of fine dress; and even the clergy let their hair hang down their shoulders curled and powdered.

This prosperity was interrupted by a terrible outbreak of the Black Death, a kind of plague. Men perished by thousands. Multitudes fled from the cities, and died in the fields from exposure and want. Cartloads of corpses were buried in one grave. In Bristol the living could scarcely bury the dead. *It is estimated that one half of the population perished by the Black Death in* 1348.

Edward, like other kings, had a word with the Pope, and a right kingly word he sent him. He complained of his appointing Italians to English benefices, and said, "These things, we are well assured, are displeasing to the Divine Will." Parliament, in which now every order of the State was represented, also firmly withstood papal encroachments.

The close of this reign was as inglorious as its beginning was brilliant. After the death of Queen Philippa, Edward sank into a premature old age. He allowed a beautiful but worthless woman, named Alice Perrers, to do what she pleased with him.

He died on the 21st of June 1377. Seeing the end approaching, Alice stole the rings from his fingers, and left the palace.[1] His attendants dispersed in search of spoil, and he was left alone to die, when a priest entered unbidden, and held a crucifix before his fast-glazing eyes. The king summoned strength to thank him, took the crucifix in his hand, kissed it, wept, and died.

"Thus doth earthly glory pass away!"

[1] Such is the story usually told in history, but it is only fair to mention that another view of Alice is now held by some students. It is suggested that she was a high-born lady charged to nurse the king, that she did so faithfully, but, being a follower of Wicklif, was slandered by the monkish chroniclers. There is much to be said in favour of this view, but the question cannot be considered as settled either way.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RICHARD II., A.D. 1377-1399—WICKLIF THE REFORMER—THE PEASANTS' REVOLT.

A BEAUTIFUL boy only ten years old was now placed on the throne of England, Richard II., beloved of the nation as the son of their favourite, the deceased Black Prince. But it is sad to trace his life, from his dawn of promise to his lonely, tragic end twenty-two years afterwards. He lived in difficult times, and had not either moral or intellectual strength to clear for himself a safe and worthy path.

Very different in character was a man who had already risen to eminence when Richard became king, John de Wicklif, born about 1324, in a village near Richmond in Yorkshire, and deservedly called "The Morning Star of the Reformation."

Being the most distinguished scholar of Oxford, he was chosen to refute the Pope's demand of tribute and homage from Edward III., and again to oppose the shameful habit of the Papacy, of appointing non-resident Italian favourites, sometimes mere boys, to the best English livings. Four times over he was cited to give an account of himself to the ecclesiastical authorities at London, Lambeth, Oxford, and Rome. The London council, however, was quickly dispersed, owing to the strong support given to Wicklif by John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. To Rome the Reformer never went; ill-health fortunately prevented so hazardous a pilgrimage, In 1379 he was seized with dangerous illness. The friars, or begging monks, whose corrupt lives and erroneous doctrines he had unsparingly denounced, then visited him, hoping to obtain from him a recantation

of his errors. They were admitted into his presence, and, after he had given them a patient hearing, he raised himself on his pillows, and with a severe countenance, and in a firm voice, said, "I shall not die but live, and declare the evil deeds of the friars."

Most Englishmen sided with Wicklif in denouncing the general corruption of the monks and clergy.

Most Englishmen went along with him in opposing the Pope's claim to tribute and vassalage from England.

Most Englishmen opposed with him the Pope's claim to dispose of English sees and livings.

Most Englishmen shared his disgust when the Pope promised Indulgences[1] to all who helped him to fight against another rival pope set up in France.

So far, kings, nobles, and people went with Wicklif; but he went much farther, and aimed far higher than this. He, and he alone, dared to stand up and deny the right of the Pope to supreme authority in the Church. He alone boldly accused the Church of teaching false doctrines to the people, and maintained that the Word of God alone is the standard of truth, following up this assertion by accomplishing a translation of the whole Bible into the English language.

The nation thus owed to John de Wicklif the greatest of debts, and his name should ever be held in honour by us.

He died in peace in his living at Lutterworth, in Leicestershire; but some years later, by command of the Pope, his bones were dug up, burnt, and the ashes thrown into the river. For in papal eyes he "was a pestilent wretch of damnable memory . . . who, as the com-

[1] Indulgences were called "the Heavenly Treasure of the Church." "The Roman Pontiff," blasphemously said Leo X., "can, for reasonable causes, by the power of the keys, grant to the faithful, *whether in this life or in purgatory, indulgences out of the superabundance of the merits of Christ and of the saints;* and those who have truly obtained these indulgences are released from so much of the temporal punishment due for their actual sins to the Divine justice, as is equivalent to the indulgence granted and obtained." "We mercifully give and grant, in the Lord," said Leo XII., "a plenary indulgence, remission, and pardon of all their sins, to all the faithful of Christ, truly penitent and confessing their sins, and receiving the Holy Communion, *who shall visit the churches of blessed Peter and Paul*," etc. We may well marvel how even a Pope could dare thus to invent such things, and attach such conditions to the Divine forgiveness of sins. Indulgences were offered for sins yet future.

plement of wickedness, invented a new translation of Scripture into his mother tongue." So wrote Arundel, Bishop of London.

We have seen how terribly the Black Death had thinned the population of England. This naturally raised the value of labour, and roused a restless spirit amongst the labourers, whose condition was cruel and abject in the extreme. To check their wandering in search of better pay, or to seek their fortunes in the towns, now rising in importance, a harsh and humiliating Statute of Labourers was passed. It commanded that the peasant should be bound to serve the employer "who shall require him so to do, and shall take only the wages which were accustomed to be taken in the neighbourhood, two years before the plague began;" and if he quitted his place of bondage "he should be branded on the forehead with the letter F," for Fugitive. A long wail of complaint now rose throughout the land. "The proud rule at cold distance," was the cry.

"Piteously the orphans wail in low estate,
Fatherless, motherless, hungry, and desolate."

Poorly clothed, fed, and housed, they yet felt that their greatest hardship was that to them freedom was denied. They were fast bound to the soil, and not allowed to leave the master whose tenants they were. In this reign, also, a poll tax, levied on every male and female above fourteen, added to their misery. Several incidents caused the smouldering discontent to break into open revolt. A man named John Ball stimulated and gave expression to their complaints. A blacksmith named Wat Tyler, whose daughter a low tax-gatherer had insulted, became their leader. A gathering multitude of rebels swarmed up to London, and, passing the king's barge, "set up shouts and cries as if all the devils of hell had come into their company." Many of them, getting hold of drink, roamed the streets as night set in, committing wild havoc and plunder.

A mob of 60,000 men met Richard at Mile End. Their behaviour to him was respectful, and their demands were quietly made. These were:—(1) The total abolition of slavery. (2) Reduction of rent of land. (3) Full liberty of buying and selling in any market. (4) A general pardon for past offences.

Richard was willing to grant all they required, and possibly the rising might have ended well, had not some miscreants of the party attacked the Tower, and murdered Archbishop Sudbury. This of course awakened mistrust of their intentions.

The king chanced to encounter the mob again, and when some wild words of Wat Tyler's led to his being hastily murdered, Richard with great presence of mind rode into the midst of the rebels, shouting, "I am your king! I will be your guide!"

Richard probably meant to keep his royal word to the peasants, but his nobles would not let him do so. "They are ours," they said; "you have no right to set them free."

Yet, though the movement seemed fruitless, it was not so. Fifty years after the Black Death, serfdom had for ever passed away from England.

As years went on, Richard lost touch with nobles and peasantry alike. The generous impulses of his youth faded away. He hardened into a selfish ruler. Then Henry of Lancaster headed a rebellion against him, and he was compelled to sign his abdication, and give up his royal crown and ring to Henry. He was confined in Pontefract Castle, in Yorkshire; and within that large and gloomy stronghold it is supposed that the son of the Black Prince, once the darling of the country, was either foully murdered, or left to die of starvation. Truly those were cruel days!

CHAPTER XIX.

HENRY IV., A.D. 1399—HENRY V., 1413—HENRY VI., 1422—EDWARD IV., 1461—EDWARD V., 1483—RICHARD III., 1483—HENRY VII., 1485.

SEVEN kings pass before us in the fifteenth century, a sorrowful period of English history. It was a time of going backwards rather than forwards. Selfishness and party spirit prevailed amongst the people, and the Church, rejecting the mission of Wicklif, became more and more corrupt.

Henry IV. partly owed his elevation to the throne to the support of the clergy. Hence, perhaps, his willingness to allow a law to be passed which authorised bishops "to keep Lollards[1] in prison as long as they thought it expedient," and commanded that, if they refused to recant, *they should be handed over to the sheriffs to be burnt.* Forty-seven persons were accordingly burnt under this Act between A.D. 1401 and A.D. 1531, including seven priests, one lawyer, one lady of rank, one poor woman, and sixteen artificers of various grades. One of the latter, a smith, had denied the presence of the body of Christ in the bread at the Lord's Supper. He was therefore shut up in a hogshead to be burnt at Smithfield. Henry, Prince of Wales, was present, and, moved by his screams of agony, he ordered the fire to be removed, and promised him life, pardon, and threepence a day if he would recant. The poor fellow, half-dead as he was, refused this offer, and was committed anew to the flames.

It did not occur to men in those days that dire pain could not *alter* men's opinions, although it might make them *deny* them! All honour to those whom suffering and death could not subdue!

[1] This name was given to the followers of Wicklif; its meaning is not clearly known.

This Prince of Wales became king in 1413. Although reported to have been somewhat wild in his youth, he proved himself noble and pious, according to his lights, in his manhood.

Unfortunately for France, and perhaps for England, he revived the English claim to the throne of France. His victories recalled the brilliant days of Edward III. and the Black Prince. At Agincourt he met an enormous French force, some six times larger than his own. Gorgeously attired, and riding a little grey horse, he himself led on his men to victory. One hundred and sixty French banners were taken, and 10,000 Frenchmen were left dead on the field, of whom 8400 were nobles and knights.

Henry's glory was sullied by his ordering his prisoners to be massacred, for fear of an attack in his rear. "These noblemen were cut to pieces; it was a dreadful sight to see."

"War has three handmaidens," said Henry, "fire, blood, and famine." The latter of these he employed at the siege of Rouen. The governor turned out a number of miserable creatures, men and women, not capable of fighting. Henry would not let them pass his lines. They perished between the two hosts of cold and want.

At last Henry bore down all opposition before him, and the French were forced to acknowledge him as Regent during the life of their imbecile King Charles, and heir to the crown at his death. He was given Katherine the Fair, daughter of Charles, in marriage. He had set his heart on marrying her, but would not abate his demands on her account. "I will have you know," he cried, "that I will not only have your princess, but your king himself, in my power, and that I will obtain the marriage that I seek, or force him from his throne, and drive you out of the kingdom."

But when apparently on the eve of realising all the dreams of his ambition, Henry was taken ill, and died. He met death with calmness, and breathed his last with the words, "My part is with the Lord Jesus —Into Thy hands"—on his lips.

Amongst his last sayings was, we are told, the sad prophecy, "I have reigned a short time and gained much. My son will reign long, and lose all." The words, if said, proved true. Henry VI., child of

Henry and Katherine the Fair, was only nine months old when he succeeded to the crown. During the long regency the war with France raged on. Then it was that a spotless heroine, Joan of Arc, almost succeeded in driving the English from her native land. No nobler life is recorded in history. Only seventeen, this shepherd girl longed for the deliverance of her country. She dreamed herself called of Heaven to accomplish it. She convinced others of her mission, and in person won victory after victory over the English. At last, through her efforts, the young French prince was crowned at Rheims, and she craved permission to go back to her aged parents, to tend her sheep once more. But Charles commanded her to remain with the army. She was taken prisoner by some French allies of the English, and handed over by them and the English generals to the judgment of the priests. All the successes which she was formerly supposed to have won by the aid of Heaven, she was now accused of gaining by witchcraft, and she was accordingly burned as a witch. "We are undone," exclaimed an English soldier, "for we have burnt a saint!"

Henry VI. proved incapable, and, at times, became utterly imbecile. His cousin Richard, Duke of York, claimed the throne, but was soon slain in battle. Then broke out the wars of the Roses, so called because the Yorkists wore a white rose as their badge, and Henry's party, the Lancastrians, a red rose. Every day the fighting became more savage. No quarter was given. Englishmen seemed to lapse into barbarians. Noblemen often changed parties, and slew with the same ferocity on either side. The great Earl of Warwick was called the King-maker, because by his support Edward was set up, and Henry VI. afterwards restored for a time. At last Henry, his courageous queen, Margaret of Anjou, and their son, young Edward, were all taken prisoners by Edward, Duke of York. The youth was slain at once. Henry's life soon ended in prison; the haughty and unfortunate queen lingered many years in captivity, and then returned to France.

Edward IV. now reigned. He made an expedition to France, but the wily French king bought him off with flattery and gold. He gave him 75,000 crowns, and promised him 50,000 more. He won

over the nobles with similar presents. Scarcely any possessions were now left to the English in France. The folly of the scheme of French conquest was at last made apparent.

Edward died early, his habits of self-indulgence having, it is said, hastened his end.

Who does not know the sad story of his two sons? Edward, a boy of thirteen years of age, and Richard, who was only nine, were confined by their uncle, Richard of Gloucester, in the Tower; it is supposed that they were there put to death. Richard then proclaimed himself king; but England hated him, and gladly summoned another claimant, Henry, Earl of Richmond, to the throne.

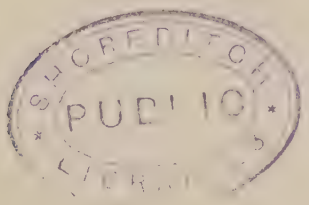
The battle of Bosworth Field decided the conflict. Richard was slain, fighting desperately, and his crown was placed on the head of Henry, who, being himself of the house of Lancaster, agreed to marry Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV., and thus a peaceful end was at last put to the long Wars of the Roses.[1]

[1] Shakespeare thus vividly describes the terrors of remorse, which Richard might be supposed to have suffered the night before the fatal battle. He imagines the ghosts of the two murdered princes to visit him, and to murmur—

"Dream on thy cousins smother'd in the Tower;
Let us be lead within thy bosom, Richard,
And weigh thee down to ruin, shame, and death.
Thy nephews' souls bid thee despair and die!"

He wakes up crying—

"Have mercy, Jesu!—Soft! I did but dream.—
O coward conscience! how dost thou afflict me!—
The lights burn blue.—It is now dead midnight.
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by.
Is there a murderer here? No.—Yes, I am.
. . . . . .
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain."



CHAPTER XX.

HENRY VII., A.D. 1485–1509—DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

HENRY VII. was descended from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, a son of Edward III. To escape the jealousy of the Yorkist king, Edward IV., his childhood had been spent chiefly in France, watched over by his mother, Margaret, between whom and himself the most loving harmony prevailed throughout his whole life. Slight, delicate in health, prudent, and peace-loving, his reign was a welcome calm after the long turmoil of the Wars of the Roses. But a storm, though lulled, leaves its effects behind, and a nation that has indulged in wild passions must suffer for it long afterwards. So it was with England. The country was far less happy at the end of the fifteenth century than it had been at its commencement. There had *then* been a brave and patriotic nobility. *Now* it was almost exterminated, and the few noble families left were weakened and impoverished. *Then* Parliament had become a reality, and kings had learnt to respect and rely on it. *Now* it was neglected. We are told that the reign of Edward IV. was the first during which no statute was passed for the redress of grievances, or the maintenance of the subject's liberty.

People were only too glad to have a respectable monarch, who would rule the land quietly. They let him do as he pleased, and, in fact, he only summoned Parliament seven times in his reign of twenty-four years. He contrived to get money enough to carry on government by various unworthy exactions, and used it as sparingly as he could. One merit he possessed. Good is the master who can retain his servants long in his service. Henry VII. never but once dismissed a Minister.

The chief troubles of his reign were from two impostors, one of whom, a boy named Lambert Simnel, pretended to be the Earl of Warwick, notwithstanding that the real earl was in the Tower, kept as a prisoner lest he should make a claim to the throne, being one of the royal family. Lambert was merely put down, and made turnspit in Henry's kitchen.

The other pretender, Perkin Warbeck, gave more trouble. He professed to be Richard, Duke of York, one of the two princes supposed to have been murdered in the Tower. He declared that he had made his escape, and his story was believed by the Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV. He was welcomed in Ireland, and in Scotland also, where he married the beautiful Lady Catherine Gordon. However, the king soon put his followers to flight. Warbeck was shut up in the Tower, but, afterwards making an attempt to escape with the real Earl of Warwick, they were both executed. His widow was allowed to live at court and wait on the queen, and for her beauty and sorrows she went by the name of the "White Rose."

The queen herself was good and lovely. The king gave her a splendid coronation. She entered London in a barge on the Thames, attended by all the guilds or trade companies. Then she was taken through the streets of London in an open car, dressed in a kirtle of cloth of gold, with her long hair hanging on her shoulders. She had several children who died young, and four who grew up,—Margaret, who married James IV. of Scotland, Mary, Arthur, and Henry. Arthur grew up and was married to Catherine, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, King and Queen of Spain. But he died a few months afterwards. Then Isabella, who was very anxious to secure the friendship of England, persuaded the Pope to say that Catherine might marry Arthur's brother, Henry, who was then a boy of twelve or thirteen. Henry VII. at first agreed to this strange plan, but afterwards he changed his mind, and, although the Pope's consent was given to it, he advised his son when dying not to marry Catherine. We shall see by and by what came of this.

The discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, a Genoese,

startled the world in this reign, and opened a wide field for enterprise. Now that hundreds of ships are passing to and fro daily between America and England, it is difficult to imagine a time when that continent was not discovered. Many and great indeed were the trials and adventures of Columbus before he set foot in the New World. He himself had no idea of its existence, but wished to sail by a westward passage to India. On Friday, the 3rd of August 1492, his expedition sailed. He had three small ships, of which he commanded one, and two gallant brothers the others. Day after day the crews threatened to rise in mutiny. They dreaded these unknown seas. They believed in no new way to India. They dreamt of no grand discoveries. Columbus, brave, calm, and patient, could hardly keep them in order. He was almost forced to yield to them, and turn the helm homewards, when "at ten o'clock on the night of October 11, 1492, gazing earnestly ahead, he saw moving lights upon some land! Four hours of exciting suspense followed. Then at two A.M., Rodrigo Triana, a sailor, saw the land itself. Dawn revealed a lovely island, San Salvador, one of the Bahamas, south-east of Florida. He afterwards discovered Cuba and Haiti, and, still thinking them portions of Asia, he called the inhabitants Indians. In two other voyages, he extended his discoveries along the coast of America.

Columbus had enemies, and was once sent home across the Atlantic in irons! But the King and Queen of Spain befriended him. He died, in honoured old age, on the 20th of May 1506.

In the world of learning almost as great an event as the discovery of America occurred. The Turks took Constantinople, and thus made an end of the Greek empire. The Greeks fled to Italy, and were dispersed all over Europe. This led to the study of their language, and more especially to that of the Greek Testament. A learned man, Erasmus, a native of Holland, spent much time in England with his friends, and published a new edition of the New Testament in Greek.

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CHAPTER XXI.

HENRY VIII., A.D. 1509—THE POPE FINALLY DISOWNED.

HENRY VIII. was eighteen years old when crowned King of England. Unlike his father, he was handsome, strong, lively, and expert in all manly sports. He was also clever, highly educated, speaking several languages with ease, and, having in his elder brother's lifetime been educated to become a churchman, he possessed a considerable knowledge of theology. He was welcomed to the throne with boundless popularity, and might have had a splendid reign, and have won a glorious name, if he had been as good as he was talented. But this was far from being the case. He was selfish and vain, and unlimited power and ceaseless flattery developed these faults to a frightful extent. He became hard and cruel,—not, indeed, like the Roman monster Nero, who enjoyed the sight of human suffering for its own sake; but if any man or woman in the least thwarted his wishes, Henry would sweep them from existence as we might kill a gnat or a flea. It was a saying of his, "Happy they who never saw a king, and whom a king never saw." Certainly his rule illustrated the proverb.

But his faults lay hidden at first. His court was the most splendid in Europe. The two greatest potentates of the day, the King of France and the Emperor of Germany, Spain, and Italy, vied for his friendship. Henry favoured now one, and now the other. The emperor came to England, and was entertained eight days with great pomp. Henry himself went to France, and met King Francis I. in the so-called Field of the Cloth of Gold, robed in cloth of silver ribbed with gold.

The government meanwhile was carried on by Henry's first favourite, Thomas Wolsey. This remarkable man was son of an

Ipswich grazier. At Oxford he was called the "Boy Bachelor," having earned that degree when only fifteen. He became in turn Fellow of Magdalen, a rector, Chaplain to the King, King's Almoner,

THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD.

Bishop of Lincoln, Archbishop of York, Archbishop of Canterbury, Chancellor of England, and Legate of the Pope. His talents, his wonderful aptness for business, and his tact in pleasing Henry, raised

him high above all others. "All his endeavour was to satisfy the king's mind, who was young, disposed to pleasure, having as little inclination to trouble himself with business as a wild ox to be yoked to a plough." Wolsey aimed at keeping Henry amused, like a spoiled child, preparing for him feasts of extraordinary magnificence. In three years the king squandered £1,800,000, left him by his father. Sometimes he lost from £36 to £48 a day in gambling. Wolsey himself lived in great state. There were 500 men in his household; nobles waited upon him. When he went abroad, two ushers preceded him, crying, "On, lords and masters, make way for my Lord's Grace!" Two great crosses of silver were borne before him, and he rode on a mule trapped with crimson velvet, with gilt stirrups.

But all this glory came to an end, and on this wise.

Henry grew tired of his wife, Catherine of Arragon, when he saw that there was no hope of having a son by her. He flirted with a beautiful and accomplished lady of the court, named Anne Boleyn, but she discouraged his attentions. Determined all the more to win her, he now professed to fear that he had sinned in marrying Catherine, his brother's widow, and applied to the Pope to obtain a divorce. One Pope had permitted the marriage. Might not another loose him from it? The Pope was in a difficulty! He drew up, indeed, a Bull allowing a divorce, but was afraid of publishing it, lest he should offend Charles, Emperor of Germany, and nephew of Catherine. It was also awkward to allow that any previous Pope had made a mistake in permitting the marriage. Out of patience with the Pontiff, Henry turned to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and they gave their opinion in favour of a divorce, declaring that marriage with a sister-in-law was against the laws of God, and that therefore no Pope was justified in allowing it. Wolsey, though not much opposed to the divorce, objected to Henry's marrying Anne Boleyn, because she belonged to a Protestant family, and had also a bitter dislike to him. Not without cause; for in her girlhood she had loved Lord Percy, and had been loved in return, when Wolsey, for some underhand plans of his own, contrived to get the engagement broken off. Wolsey fell on his knees and prayed the king in vain not to marry her.

Henry only frowned upon him, stripped him of all his offices, and took possession of his enormous wealth. Having lived for this world alone, the old man's heart was broken. Tears streamed from his eyes as he bewailed his fate, exclaiming, "If I had served my God as diligently as I have served my king, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs!" He was cited to London on a charge of high treason, but, falling ill on the way, died at the Abbey of Leicester.

Catherine had been summoned to appear with Henry at the hall of the Black Friars' Court in London, where the question of the divorce was to be decided. She threw herself at his feet, and pleaded with tears the many years that she had been a faithful wife to him, and the children she had borne him. All in vain. Henry had his own way. She was sent away from Windsor Palace, and he never saw her again. "And all the men took the part of Henry, and all the women took the part of Catherine."

Henry's next Chancellor and favourite was, strange to say, Thomas Cromwell, who had proved Wolsey's most faithful friend, and whose eloquent defence of his fallen chief had brought him suddenly into notice. His character was different to that of Wolsey, whose chief motive was personal ambition, and the disappointment of whose life was that he had not been elected Pope. Cromwell's aim was to make Henry great, and England free from Rome. The crisis at which he became Chancellor made his task most difficult.

In 1529 the Pope had summoned Henry to appear at Rome within forty days, to plead his cause against Catherine. All England was indignant at the summons, and even Wolsey wrote: "If at any time his Grace should come to Rome, it would be with such an army as would be formidable to the Pope and all Italy!" Nevertheless, the summons was repeated in May 1532. In January 1533 Henry was privately married to Anne Boleyn. *In February* 1533 *an Act was introduced and passed, declaring that appeals to the Pope had been found fruitful in delay and miscarriage of justice, and were never to be made again. And in* 1534 *the great Act of Supremacy was passed, which ordered that the king should be "accepted and reputed the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England."*

Thus, out of the miserable question of the king's divorce came the complete release of England from subjection to the Pope.

Great and grand as was this deliverance, it left the Church of England like a ship loosed from its moorings in the middle of a storm. The Pope had been its supreme head. Who was to replace him? Had Cranmer, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, been a man of power, he might possibly have secured to it some measure of self-rule, but he was timid, and more at home with his books than amid affairs of State. Cromwell saw, as he thought, the only one policy possible at the time, and he boldly pursued it. He determined to make the sovereign himself head of the Church as well as the State, and he compelled all men, high and low, to abjure the supremacy of the Pope and to acknowledge that of Henry. How far the severity with which he and Henry treated all who would not accept the new order of things was necessary, we perhaps cannot now judge. There were outbreaks in the north and in the west, but they were stamped out with decision. The fact was, that the old evil of a divided allegiance could no longer be endured, and was now to be done away with for ever.

The vigour of Cromwell's government doubtless saved the land from foreign invasion, of which it stood in serious danger, for the Pope had laid it under an interdict, and had excommunicated the king. England was therefore thought fair spoil for attack, and its ruin was talked of as certain. The Scots and French were ready to join hands against it, and the Irish offered their allegiance to the Pope. "It was counted but a morsel amongst all these choppers." But Henry had strengthened the navy, and Cromwell had the reins of power well in hand, so all this blustering died away harmlessly.

There were three classes of persons now in England: firstly, those who maintained the supremacy of the Pope, and retained their loyalty to their king only so far as he allowed; secondly, those who renounced allegiance to the Pope, but who clung to all Romish doctrine; and thirdly, those who were more or less in favour of Protestant doctrine. Besides these were the random thinkers, who, loosened from old belief, took up all sorts of wild notions

Amongst those who died bravely in the Pope's cause were Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More. As Fisher laid his grey head on the block, he opened the New Testament, and his eye fell on the words, "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God." Cromwell wished to spare Sir Thomas More, who was one of the most learned and eminent men in the land, but it was the king's will that he should die. Long ago, in the days when Henry would walk in the garden of More with his arm across his shoulders, More had warned his family that if his life could but win the king a single castle in France, he knew he would have his head off. He had gauged truly the character of his sovereign. "I thank the Lord," said he, as the boat dropped from his garden steps at Chelsea in the early morning to take him to the Tower, "that the field is won." "I pray thee, good Alice," he said to his wife, "is not this house as near heaven as my own?"

Cromwell now set himself thoroughly to reform the Church. The need was great. It was steeped in ignorance. For instance, in the diocese of Gloucester, out of 311 clergy only 168 could repeat the Ten Commandments! The clergy cheated the people with lying wonders. Thus there was a crucifix at Bexley in Kent, the face of which looked grave if copper were offered, milder if silver, while it smiled on gold! Amongst supposed relics which were worshipped, were the spear which pierced the Saviour's side, pieces of the cross, a bone of Mary Magdalene, etc. There was flagrant immorality amongst the clergy and monks. Even Wolsey, who was of course unmarried, had a son whom he wished to make Bishop of Durham! A commission, sent out to examine the monasteries all over England, reported that only *one-third* of the number was free from shameful irregularities.

The root of all these evils was ignorance of the Bible. Wicklif's New Testament was difficult to procure, and no English Bible or Testament was printed till 1526.

To remedy all this, firstly, a large number of the monasteries were put down; secondly, Henry authorised the publication and circulation of a new edition of the Bible by Miles Coverdale.

So far well: but Henry's greediness in taking to himself the spoils

of the monasteries disgusted right-minded people. Moreover, he upheld Roman Catholic doctrines to the end of his life. Having assumed almost the position of a Pope, he published six Articles of Faith, to which all were to subscribe, on pain of imprisonment or

THOMAS CRANMER, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

death. These made against Protestantism, while the Act of Supremacy could not be acknowledged by Papists; and a foreigner observed, "This is a strange land, where Papists are hung as traitors, and Protestants are burnt as heretics!"

Thomas Cromwell remained in power eight years. Henry soon grew tired of Anne Boleyn, who was the mother of the Princess Elizabeth. Finding him fondling Lady Jane Seymour, she was taken ill from excitement, and gave birth to a still-born boy. Henry was furious with disappointment, and after a few weeks charged the unhappy queen with unfaithfulness to him, along with five gentlemen, one of whom was her own brother. The monstrous nature of the accusation was enough to show its falsehood, but, besides this, only one of the five would utter a word against her, and all were quickly put to death. Anne defended herself in vain. She was beheaded; and Henry, in a hunting-dress, waited under a tree in Richmond Park till he heard a gun from the Tower announcing that the blow had fallen. He spurred his horse, galloped off, and was the next day wedded to Jane Seymour. She, however, died in a few months, after giving birth to a son, afterwards Edward VI. Henry then wanted another wife, and offered his hand to the Duchess of Milan, who, however, is reported to have refused it, saying that, as she had only one head, she would rather decline the honour. Cromwell now tried to form an alliance for him with the Protestant princes of Germany. Anne of Cleves came over, and was married to him, but she was very plain in features, and he quickly got a separation from her. He could not forgive Cromwell having suggested her to his notice. The usual course of things took place. He was accused of treason. No wonder he indignantly exclaimed, "I a traitor!" recalling his labours night and day in the king's service. Cranmer defended him. "He was such a servant," said he, "in my judgment, as no prince in this realm ever had. He loved your Majesty, as I thought, no less than God." But he was a doomed man, and after a few weeks was beheaded. Cromwell no doubt was not faultless, but he was a great man in public life, and in private was simple in habits, kind-hearted, and most generous to the poor.

Soon afterwards Henry married a pretty girl of the Papist family of the Duke of Norfolk, but, intelligence cropping up of her improper conduct before marriage, the poor young thing was quickly executed, and her mother along with her. Strange to say, the king found

another woman to marry him, the widow of Lord Latimer, who luckily outlived him.[1]

Henry throughout his reign wished to be thought a good Catholic, and to prove it encouraged the persecution of so-called Gospellers. Several were burnt in Wolsey's time. Even Sir Thomas More sentenced some to death. After the death of Cromwell, more Protestants suffered, amongst whom was a lady, Anne Askew by name, whose husband had turned her out of doors for her opinions. She was charged with not believing in transubstantiation. She defended her views firmly, and, after enduring terrible suffering on the rack, was sentenced to be burnt. Unable to walk, she was carried to the stake on a chair, and died with courage.

In 1547 Henry died, aged only fifty-five.

We may well be ashamed of the servility with which our forefathers bowed before this wicked king, and at the same time we cannot be too thankful for the freedom from Rome which came to us by God's providence through his means.

[1] She had, however, a narrow escape with her life. "Henry had a diseased leg, most distressing and offensive to himself and every one else, so that he was chiefly dependent on his wife; and she even ventured to argue with him, till one day he flew into a passion. 'A fine thing,' he cried, 'it is when women become such clerks! Much it is to my comfort to be taught by my wife in my old age;' and in his passion he bade the Chancellor Wriothesley and the Bishop of Winchester draw up an impeachment against her. Tidings reached the queen, and she fell into a violent fit of hysterics. Her shrieks reached the king, who, being really fond of her, caused himself to be carried into her room, when she was quite enough in her senses to show such humility and affection as touched his heart. And when Wriothesley came with forty gentlemen to conduct her to the Tower, Henry received him with a torrent of abuse, calling him beast, fool, knave, so that Katherine was forced to intercede for him."—Yonge's *Cameos*, v. 4

CHAPTER XXII.

EDWARD VI., A.D. 1547–1553—COMPILATION OF THE ENGLISH PRAYER-BOOK.

AGAIN, for the third time, a child sat on the throne of England. Edward VI. was only ten years old when his father, Henry VIII., died. He was led before the council, who received him with bended knees, and kissed his hand, saying, "God save your Grace;" and the little fellow in return "made his speech gracefully, taking off his cap, and saying, 'We heartily thank you, my lords all.'"

Henry VIII. had by will appointed a council to rule during his son's minority. From their number, Seymour, Earl of Hertford, was chosen chief, with the titles of Lord Protector and Duke of Somerset. He won a great victory over the Scots at Pinkie, not far from Edinburgh, on the 10th of September 1547, "Black Saturday," as it was consequently called. Many thousands of the Scots were killed; and we read, "As many hands make light work, it was wonderful to see in how short a time all the bodies were stripped, tall men, clear of skin and big of bone!" How many wives and mothers wept for many a day for these "tall men"!

Somerset had no easy task in England. There was scarcity amongst the labourers, which led to riots. The papal party was naturally displeased with his Protestant rule. Above all, the nobles were envious of his greatness, and ready to find fault with his actions. His own brother, Lord Seymour, High Admiral of England, tried to supplant his influence over Edward, by giving the lad money, and by other tricks. He was tried, and condemned to die. Somerset raised no voice to save him, and he was executed.

Meanwhile, the Reformation of the English Church was quietly advanced under the influence of Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. This able man had commanded the respect of Henry VIII. more than any one else; gentle but upright, he alone had dared to plead for the lives of Anne Boleyn and of Cromwell. "He had guided the Church in that evil time as he best might, beneath a sword hanging over his head by a hair. Now, amidst all the plots and counterplots of the court, no crime or conspiracy could be traced to him; no plunder of Church or Crown touched his hands." In peace he carried on a work of which we reap the benefit to this day. It was he who compiled our Prayer-Book, making beautiful translations from the old Latin books of devotion, and avoiding all that was superstitious in them. Two editions of his Prayer-Book were brought out in this reign, the second being more distinctly Protestant than the first. On the 1st of January 1549 the book was accepted by the Act of Uniformity, and on the following Whitsunday *the people for the first time heard the prayers read in their own tongue.* How delightful it must have been to all pious minds to be able to join intelligently in worship, instead of listening to the jargon of a strange language! An order was also published, that within three months a copy of the Bible should be placed in every church.

The Six Articles, or "Whip with six tails," as it was called, of Henry, was abolished, and all other penal Acts relating to matters of religion.

Still, even Cranmer could not see his way to grant complete liberty of conscience. A poor woman, named Joan Bocher, was brought before him, who held some wild notions about the Incarnation of Christ. Having reasoned with her in vain, he, although reluctantly, agreed with the rest of the council in sentencing her to death, and she was accordingly burnt.

Not a single Catholic, however, was put to death for his religion in this reign.

Northumberland, however, succeeded in overthrowing Somerset, and finally in causing him to be accused of high treason, and sentenced to death. Since Henry's time, a terrible inclination to pronounce men

guilty whenever accused seems to have characterised the nobility and Commons. The late Protector had, it may be, too much aggrandised himself, and the splendid palace he was building for himself on the Thames stirred up the envy of his enemies. But proof of treason in him there was none. Yet was he condemned to die on the morning of the 22nd of January 1552. He was so beloved in London, that it was feared an attempt would be made to rescue him. The inhabitants of the city were commanded to keep to their houses, but the proclamation was ineffectual. The great square was thronged with spectators. A little before eight, the Tower guard brought up their prisoner. "His countenance was singularly handsome, and his features were marked with a habitual expression of noble melancholy. As he stepped upon the platform, he knelt and said a short prayer; he then rose, and, bowing to the people, spoke bareheaded. 'Masters and good fellows, I am come hither to die, but a true and faithful man as was any unto the king's majesty and to his realm. . . . And, my friends, more have I to say to you concerning religion. I have been always, being in authority, a furtherer of it to the glory of God to the utmost of my power; whereof I am nothing sorry, but rejoice most gladly.' He was still speaking, when, through the breathless silence, a noise, as of a large number of men approaching, was heard, and a shout arose of 'Pardon! pardon! a pardon from the king!' But Somerset knew better, and quieted the people, saying, 'There is no such thing, good people. Let us now pray for the king.' He knelt quietly by the block, and three times saying, 'Lord Jesus, save me,' the axe fell, and all was over."

So beloved was he, that many rushed forward to dip their handkerchiefs in his blood, to preserve them as keepsakes of him whom the Londoners, whatever his faults, familiarly called "The Good Protector."

Edward was a boy of promising talents. When only eight years of age, he was able to write letters to his father in Latin. As he grew older, he studied with all his might, and began to take a deep interest in the affairs of the kingdom, keeping a diary with great regularity of all that happened. Schemes for improving the administration were already shaping themselves in his young mind. Eighteen

grammar schools were founded in his reign. One day Ridley preached before the king about the distress amongst the London poor. Edward wrote to the mayor on the subject, and the result was the foundation of Christ's Hospital for the education of poor children, and of St. Thomas's and St. Bartholomew's Hospitals.

But Edward's health had never been strong, and, when only sixteen, it became evident that his life was drawing to a close. The Duke of Northumberland, who had ruled, or misruled, England since the death of Somerset, now trembled for the future. A Protestant in name, because Protestantism was in fashion under Edward, he dreaded the day when Mary should succeed to her brother, for she was known to be firmly attached to Popery, and all that had been done for the Reformation was likely to be upset. The wily nobleman therefore contrived a plot, in which he too easily persuaded the dying young king to take part. He persuaded Edward to leave the kingdom by will to his cousin, the Lady Jane Grey, passing by his sister Mary, nominally, as having been illegitimate. Once convinced that it was his duty to make this arrangement, Edward impatiently pushed forward the matter. He had before now, and even with tears, entreated Mary to renounce Popery, but in vain. Now, was it not, they reasoned, his duty to prevent the land being led back into superstition and idolatry? Cranmer very unwillingly put his name to the agreement. The deed was accomplished, and a few days later, on the 7th of July, the king died. A wild storm with lightnings and floods of rain, which darkened that summer night with unusual gloom, well presaged what was in store for England!

CHAPTER XXIII.

MARY, A.D. 1553–1558—POPERY RE-ESTABLISHED.

The Lady Jane Grey, to whom Edward left his crown, was a granddaughter of Henry VII., and daughter of the Duke of Suffolk. She was gentle, learned, and pious, and her delight was to read Plato in the original Greek, as she sat under the fine old trees of her father's beautiful park at Broadgate, in Leicestershire. No ambitious dreams had ever entered her breast. When she was brought to London, expecting to see Edward, and was suddenly told of his death, and that she herself was to be queen, she fainted away. On her recovery, she protested against her elevation, but was forced to yield by her parents and husband, and his father, the wicked Duke of Northumberland. She was not long, however, to share the undesired and unlawful dignity. Not a voice was raised to salute her as she was driven in state to the Tower, and a lad even dared to shout, "The Lady Mary has the better title!"

Mary's friends rallied quickly round her as soon as the fact of Edward's death was publicly known. They brought her triumphantly to London, and proclaimed her queen at Cheapside. "God save the Queen!" now was sung out from thousands of throats, and all through the summer evening and the summer night the bells pealed out her welcome from every tower and steeple. Lady Jane's party were utterly disconcerted. Her father came rushing to her, and tore down the canopy under which she was sitting, crying out that she was no longer queen. She rejoiced, and innocently asked if she might leave the Tower and go home. Alas! no such easy exit from its gates awaited her.

In the first flush of her triumph, Mary was merciful, and spared her life; but subsequently she, her husband, and her parents, were put to death, Lady Jane laying her head on the block with more calmness than she had before consented to be crowned. Northumberland, of course, had to die, though, to win favour, he offered to turn Papist at once. When condemned, he asked to see the sons of the Protector Somerset, and to them he confessed that he had falsely accused their father. Few out of those who went to the block better deserved their fate than this false duke.

Mary was now queen indeed. She had many queenly qualities. She was courageous, energetic, intelligent, and accomplished. She was now in her thirty-sixth year. "Her eyes were dauntless, bright, and steady. In figure she was short and spare, and her voice was deep like that of a man." Her youth had been overshadowed by the sorrows of her mother, Catherine of Arragon. She had been brought up strictly as a Papist, and had stedfastly resisted every attempt to make her renounce her faith, insisting that she would rather die than apostatise. She was too conscientious to change her opinions, too narrow-minded to study those of others. "As for your new books," she once said to Ridley, "I thank God I never read none of them, never did, and never will do!"

Now she found herself queen, and welcomed to the throne with an outburst of popularity.

A few short years, and that popularity was lost, never to be regained.

Too soon the English found out that her aims and wishes were not *their* aims and wishes; for Mary's one idea of religion was unquestioning obedience to the Church, that is, to the priests and the Pope, and her one ambition was to restore Popery in the land. She considered herself called to the throne by Providence for this one purpose. No promises were sacred which seemed to interfere with her supposed mission, and there was no room in her heart for man, woman, or child who held Protestant doctrines. She promised, before being made queen, that she would not interfere with the religion she found established in the land. But her first act was to call upon the

Commons to re-establish Roman Catholicism. She promised that she would not marry without the consent of her people. She set herself at once upon having for her husband Philip II., King of Spain, the man of all others whom the nation did not wish her to marry, both because he was a bigoted Papist, and because they feared to become mixed up in his war against France. She promised, later on, that, if they would only acknowledge the Pope's supremacy, the lands alienated from the Church should not be demanded. But she asked subsidies for the Crown, and spent them, as far as she dared, in redeeming Church property.

There were multitudes in the land who still held Romish doctrine, but few wished the laws allowing persecution to be re-enacted. But Mary desired and obtained the re-enactment of some of the worst of them.

Mary got her own way in all points, but bitterly she suffered for it in the end. The Roman Catholic religion was re-established. She married Philip. She persuaded the Pope to remove his interdict from the land, and grant it his blessing. Heretics were sent to the Tower and the stake. But Mary found all her schemes end in vanity and vexation of spirit.

It was on the 31st of July 1554 that Philip arrived at Southampton. Mary had warned him to bring his own cook, lest he should be poisoned, and he was accompanied by musketeers disguised as pages and lackeys. Mary, with a beating heart, awaited him at Winchester, and in the cathedral of that ancient city they were married. But soon she found that Philip could not endure her, and was for ever trying to escape from her side to return to sunny Spain, or even to his dreary Netherlands. As years went on, his neglect of her increased, and at last he left her for ever.

In the autumn of the year of this marriage occurred the reconciliation with Rome. Cardinal Pole, cousin of Mary, brought the glad news to her of papal favour. On St. Andrew's Day, 30th November, Philip and Mary received him in Westminster Abbey. The Lords and Commons were assembled, and being asked by Gardiner whether they wished to obtain the Pope's absolution, four hundred voices said,

"We do." Pole then arose, and amid silence, broken by the smothered sobs of the queen, who was on her knees with the whole assembly, he proclaimed, "We do restore you again into the unity of our Mother the Holy Church, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Now came the work of punishing all who refused to join the Church of Rome.

In the short reign of Mary, nearly four hundred men, women, and children were put to death. Amongst this noble army of martyrs, the following were some of the most noteworthy :—

John Rogers, a canon of St. Paul's, had assisted Tyndall in translating the Bible into English. He was asked whether he believed the sacrament to be the very body and blood of Christ. He answered, "I think it to be false. Christ is corporally (bodily) in heaven, and so cannot be in your sacrament." He was therefore sentenced to be burnt. "On February 4, 1555, he was led to Smithfield, saying the 51st Psalm by the way, all the people rejoicing at his constancy, with great praises and thanks to God for the same. In the presence of a wonderful number of people, the fire was put to him; he, as one feeling no pain, washed his hands in the flame as though it had been cold water, and, after lifting them up to heaven, most mildly this happy martyr yielded his spirit to his heavenly Father. His wife and children, eleven in number, one a babe on her breast, met him by the way. This sorrowful sight could nothing move him, but he took his death with wonderful patience in defence of Christ's gospel."

Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, confessed that he believed not in the bodily presence of Christ in the sacrament, so he was condemned and burnt. He had been chaplain to the Protector Somerset. "His life was so pure and good, no breath of slander could fasten on him. He was spare of diet, spare of words, sparest of time." After seventeen months in prison, he was, to his great delight, sent to his own cathedral city to be burnt. A crowd of people came out, weeping and lamenting, to meet him. One said to him, urging him to recant, "Consider that life is sweet, and death is bitter." He answered, "The life to come is more sweet, and the death to come more bitter." He

spent most of his last night in prayer. He endured great agony in the fire for three-quarters of an hour, and died crying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, and one of the most famous of English preachers, was thrown with Archbishop Cranmer, Bishop Ridley, and Bradford, into the Tower. They studied the New Testament together, and agreed they could not find the Romish doctrine about the sacrament in it. "I read the New Testament seven times in prison," said Latimer. After two years' confinement, the three bishops were sent to Oxford to die. Bishop Ridley was chained to one side of the stake, and Latimer to the other. "Be of good cheer, brother," said Ridley, "for God will either assuage the fury of the flames, or else strengthen us to abide it." "Be of good comfort," said Latimer, "brother Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out." Latimer died quickly, but Ridley endured great torment.

Archbishop Cranmer was the one of all others whom Mary and the Romanists hated most. For he had approved of Henry's divorce from the queen's mother. He had taken the lead in moulding the Church of England according to scriptural lines. He was known as "the mildest and meekest of the Reformers." Great was their triumph when, worn out with long imprisonment, he recanted! Equally great was the sorrow of his Protestant friends. But, notwithstanding his recantation, his death was determined on. Heart-broken for his fall, he was brought forth to die at the stake. Then he astonished his enemies by declaring the Pope to be Antichrist, and denying the Romish doctrine as to the Lord's Supper. Boldly and undauntedly he stood up at the stake, while the flames curled around him, steadily holding out his right hand in the fire, and saying, with reference to his having signed the recantation, "This unworthy right hand," and holding his left hand up towards heaven. Greatly he had sinned; greatly he repented.

Cardinal Pole told the citizens of London that "no kind of men were so pernicious to the commonwealth as the Protestants." Their common sense judged otherwise. They rather classed men who lived

such holy lives and died such noble deaths amongst the greatest heroes of mankind!

A blind boy was burnt at Gloucester; a mother and two daughters in Guernsey, one of whom gave birth to a child amidst the flames; the infant was rescued and tossed back into the fire!

Still more to be pitied were those who perished from scanty food and foul air in gloomy dungeons. It was no comfort to those who loved them that Mary persecuted them for conscience' sake, "accounting," like the Jews of old, "that she did God service." Yet she found herself baffled. The more she persecuted the Protestants, the bolder they grew, and the more she was detested. Notes expressing the general disgust were picked up by her in the galleries of the palace, and even in her own bedroom. A lady wrote to Bishop Bonner, calling him the "common cut-throat to the bishops. Every child can call you by name, and say, Bloody Bonner is Bishop of London! You have lost the hearts of 20,000 that were rank Papists within this twelve months."

Thus disappointed in all her aims, the unhappy Mary approached her end. She had passionately desired a child, but Heaven had not granted the blessing. She was forced to acknowledge her sister Elizabeth, a known friend of the Reformers, as her successor. On the 16th of November, while Mass was said at her bedside, she died. The same epithet that was applied to Bonner has been applied in history to her. Calais, the last English possession, was lost in this reign. Mary took it so to heart, that she was reported to have said, "If my body were opened when I am dead, the name Calais would be found written on my heart." Well has Charles Dickens remarked on this: "I should have thought, if anything were written on it, they should have found the words, 'Jane Grey, Hooper, Rogers, Latimer, Cranmer, and 300 people burnt alive within four years of my wicked reign, including sixty women and forty little children.' But it is enough that their names are written in heaven." The epithet "Bloody" belongs more truly to the system of religion of which she was merely the tool. Never should we forget that it was Popery which made her reign terrible, and made her go down to the grave abhorred by the people of England!

CHAPTER XXIV.

QUEEN ELIZABETH, A.D. 1558.

ENGLAND breathed freely when Queen Mary was no more! The heavy gloom of her miserable reign was at once lifted! Men instinctively felt that the fires of Smithfield would be lit no more, that Englishmen would no longer be worried and tortured to become the slaves of Rome!

The whole nation rejoiced. Even Papists were sick of persecution. The accession of the Princess Elizabeth was like the sudden outburst of sunshine! the dawn of morning! the coming of summer!

For England already loved her. Men and women had had glimpses of her fair, open face in her girlhood. They had trembled for her safety when persecuted by the Romanists. They had longed for her amid the deepening depression of the last five years, spent under the rule of a woman whose un-English heart had never beaten in unison with that of her people.

The youth of the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn, had been overshadowed by her mother's fate. But sorrow had only made her prudent, not bitter. When her sister came to the throne, she had heartily supported her. She welcomed her at the gates of London, and sat by her side as she drove through the city. When plot after plot was made against Mary, Elizabeth held loyally aloof from them. It needed all her tact to do so, and she failed to allay the jealous fears of the queen. Once, at least, her life was seriously in danger. Sir Thomas Wyatt's conspiracy had failed. Vague hints had been thrown out by him which seemed to implicate her. Although,

when at the point of death, he strongly asserted her innocence, she was summoned to London, and orders were issued to send her to the Tower. Having been ill, she was conveyed by slow stages to town. On entering the city, the covering of her litter was thrown back, and she was seen dressed in white, her face pale, but the expression lofty, scornful, and magnificent. She asked leave to send a few lines to the

queen. They may be seen now, in the State Paper Office, written in a firm, clear hand. She protested her innocence, and begged permission to see her sister. "In late days," she touchingly observed, "I heard my Lord of Somerset say, that if his brother had been suffered to speak with him, he had never suffered."[1] "I humbly crave," she continued, "to speak to your Highness, which I would not be so bold

[1] The Earl of Somerset signed the death-warrant of his brother, the Duke of Northumberland, and Lord High Admiral of England, for high treason, in the reign of Edward VI.

as to desire if I knew not myself most clear, as I know myself most true." The letter was sent, but no answer was returned. She was brought in a barge to the Tower. "I never thought to have come here as a prisoner," she said, and, turning to the soldiers, she added, "I pray you, my good fellows, bear me witness that I come in no traitor, and thereon will stake my death." She threw herself upon a wet stone, and, when begged to come in out of the rain, she said, "Better here than in a worse place! I know not whither ye will bring me!" She fully expected to be executed, and asked whether the block upon which the head of Lady Jane Grey had fallen was still in the yard.

Whether Mary desired her death or not, England would not allow it. Lord High Admiral Howard threatened revenge if any harm were done her. After four or five weeks' confinement, it was found necessary to release her from the Tower. On the 19th of May she was taken thence up the river. She thought she was being conveyed to her death, but the people thought she was set free, and fired three salvoes of artillery for joy! Neither anticipation was correct. She was removed to Woodstock, where she remained closely guarded for a year. Thence she was summoned to Hampton Court, and sixty gentlemen, who had once belonged to her suite, rode out to attend upon her, but found that she was still to be treated as a prisoner. She was subsequently granted an interview with her sister, when she earnestly protested her innocence. "Sabe Dios!" (God knows), murmured Mary in Spanish, and dismissed her.

Elizabeth remained more or less in disgrace till the death of Mary, who was, however, obliged at last to acknowledge her as her rightful successor.

Now her day of liberty and glory had come! The week preceding her coronation had been spent, as was usual, in the Tower. On Saturday, the 7th of January 1558, she was taken thence in state to Westminster. She was not one who often gave expression to her deeper feelings, yet, as she passed out in her carriage under the gates of the Tower, she stood still, looked up to heaven, and said,—

"O Lord, almighty and everlasting God, I give Thee most humble

thanks that Thou hast been so merciful unto me as to spare me to behold this most joyful day; and I acknowledge that Thou hast dealt most wonderfully and mercifully with me. As Thou didst with Thy servant, Daniel the prophet, when Thou deliveredst him out of the den, from the cruelty of the raging lions, even so I was overwhelmed, and only by Thee delivered. To Thee, therefore, only be thanks, honour, and praise, for ever! Amen."

She then took her seat, passed through crowded streets, and under crowded balconies. Groups of children waited for her with their little songs. Poor women, winter though it was, flung nosegays into her lap. In Cheapside, the Corporation presented her with an English Bible. She kissed it, thanked the city for their goodly gift, and said she would diligently read therein.

"God save Queen Elizabeth! Long may she reign!" was the heartfelt cry which resounded from thousands of her people as she drove on to her palace.

QUEEN ELIZABETH IN PROCESSION.
(*From an old Picture.*)

CHAPTER XXV.

QUEEN ELIZABETH, A.D. 1558—DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS.

THE first acts of Queen Elizabeth were wise. She chose for her secretary William Cecil, a good and able man, who had filled the same office for her brother, Edward VI. She appointed Sir Nicholas Bacon Keeper of the Great Seal. She early declared what her wishes were as regarded religion. Every man was to be free to hold what opinions he thought fit. There was to be no persecution. The only stipulation was that the Romish mass was not to be performed in the churches, and that the bishops and clergy were required to renounce the supremacy of the Pope, or to resign their dignities. Cranmer's Prayer-Book was to be used in the churches. She could not bring herself, however, to allow "Bloody Bonner," late Bishop of London, and chief instigator of the persecutions, to approach her to kiss her hands!

Compared with our own days, the toleration she granted to the Roman Catholics was insufficient, for they were strictly forbidden the *public* performances of their religion, though *private* celebrations of the Mass were often allowed to pass unnoticed. Compared with the days of Mary, and with the state of other countries, the toleration was large. In Spain 13,000 men, women, and children had been burnt as Protestants, and 170,000 more were racked and tortured. No Roman Catholics suffered for religion under Elizabeth until, unhappily, foreign influence tempted them to disloyalty.

The position of Elizabeth was lonely, both as a woman and as a sovereign. She had no near relatives at home. Abroad all was perplexing. Philip, King of Spain, was likewise Emperor of Germany

and Flanders. He considered himself the chief champion of Popery. The King of France had married Mary, Queen of Scotland, and grand-daughter of Henry VII. of England. He refused to acknowledge Elizabeth as queen, and advanced the claim of Mary in her stead. The Pope was ready to excommunicate Elizabeth as soon as he saw that there was no chance of her submission. The Kings of France and Spain were alike ready to invade England, and were only withheld by their jealousy of each other. They thought it could be conquered with ease. "England is likened to a bone thrown between two dogs," wrote a foreign observer. At first, indeed, Philip wished to marry Elizabeth, whom he had always greatly admired. He took it for granted that it would be impossible for her to refuse such a magnificent offer as that of his hand, and charged his ambassador to explain to her that he could only marry her on condition of her restoring Popery in England. At first Elizabeth laughingly replied that she feared he would make a bad husband, and would run away from her to Spain, as he had done from her sister Mary; but afterwards she more gravely made her final answer, that the Pope could not make it lawful for her to marry her brother-in-law. Thereupon the ambassador warned her of the danger she would incur if Philip withdrew his friendship from her. A threat always roused her spirit, and she answered, "My realm is not too poor, nor my people too faint-hearted, to defend their liberties, and to protect their rights abroad."

Elizabeth loved her people,[1] and they in return adored her. When she was reminded how Philip had interceded for her with her sister, she thankfully acknowledged it, but proudly added that it was to the people of England she owed her real gratitude. The people had saved her from destruction. She would be the people's queen, and reign in their interest.

It makes one indignant even now to read of the language used to Elizabeth, and about her, by Philip and his ambassador. They lectured her as if she were a schoolgirl, and when experience showed

[1] By the word "people" should be understood *the whole nation*, comprising all classes, from the lowest to the highest. It is a mistake to confine the meaning of the word to the lower classes alone.

how utterly vain were their menaces, they looked upon her as insane. "You will be torn in pieces, and other princes will fall out about your garments," said the ambassador to her. "We must put a bit in the queen's mouth." "This woman is possessed with a hundred thousand devils," he wrote of her; "her embarrassments are as great as we could wish. They could not be greater."

Yet England's chief danger was at first more from France than from Spain.

The Protestant party in Scotland had risen in revolt against Mary of Guise, who ruled as Regent for her daughter Mary in France. Under pretence of aiding her to subdue the rebellion, the French monarch sent a fleet to Scotland, and poured soldiers into the country. "Look to your affairs," said Elizabeth to the French ambassador, "and I will look to mine. Those armies and fleets of yours are not meant for Scotland only; your troops already at Leith are a match for the Scots." A storm scattered the fleet, but the danger was not past. The Queen of France still styled herself Queen of England. "You challenge our crown," wrote Elizabeth, "you deny our right to be queen. You snatch the pretext of a rebellion to collect your armies on our border, and you expect us to sit still like children!"

War was not declared against France, but the English did not "sit still like children." Elizabeth strained every nerve to increase the navy and strengthen the army. "It is a sight to see her exercising daily on a courser with the train bands in St. James's Park," wrote the Spanish ambassador.

Her ships under the gallant Admiral Winter out-manœuvred the French in the Forth. Her soldiers besieged the French at Leith. The foe was well matched. With gay courage the French soldiers hung garlands on May-day on the bastions; but, heroes though they were, they were forced to yield, and the Regent was compelled to sign the Treaty of Leith. By this treaty the French bound themselves *never to send an army into Scotland*, and the sovereignty of Elizabeth over England was acknowledged.

Soon after this, Mary of Guise died, and not long afterwards her son-in-law, the King of France, was accidentally killed at a tournament.

His young widow, Mary, determined to return to Scotland, and asked Elizabeth's leave to land in England, and to travel through her dominions to Scotland. But at the same time Mary refused to sign the Treaty of Leith, and it would have been absurd to allow her, a rival claimant to the English crown, to pass through the country, and thus attract the Roman Catholics to herself. She was not, therefore, allowed to land in England, and sailed direct to Leith.

CECIL, LORD BURLEIGH, QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GREAT MINISTER.
(*From the Portrait by Mark Gerard*).

CHAPTER XXVI.

ELIZABETH—MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, A.D. 1553–1587.

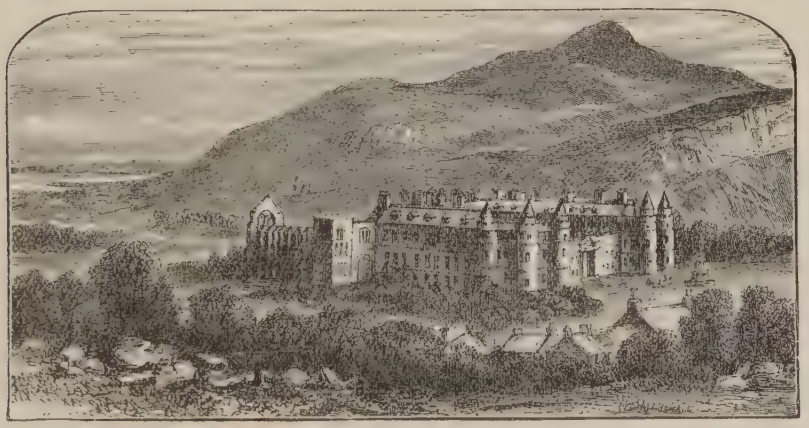
Mary Queen of Scots became the most dangerous enemy of Elizabeth, and the greatest troubler of the peace of England. She was the only child of James V. of Scotland, and great-grandchild of Henry VII. of England. Henry VIII. wished her to become the wife of his son, afterwards Edward VI., but the Scotch at that time preferred the friendship of France to that of England, so the little princess was sent thither, to be educated as the future bride of the Dauphin, or heir of the French crown.

Unfortunately there was then no such school of vice in Europe as the French court, presided over by the wicked Queen Catherine de Medicis, and Mary proved only too apt a scholar. Endowed with splendid natural gifts and great strength of character, she might, under better training, have developed into a noble woman. As it is, her history only furnishes a sad example of a life ruined by unrestrained passions. For a few weeks she enjoyed the proud position of Queen of France, as wife of Francis I. On the death of Mary of England, she assumed the English coat of arms, and refused to acknowledge Elizabeth as the lawful sovereign of England. Her husband Francis soon died, and then, unwilling to remain in a secondary position where she had been in the highest, she determined to come to Scotland, where her mother, Mary of Guise, had ruled for her, but had lately died.

Arrived in Scotland, she quickly won almost all hearts by her winning ways and graceful carriage. She soon married again, her choice falling on Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, another possible heir to the English throne.

Two objects were held firmly in view by Mary: one was to re-establish Popery in Scotland; the other to become Queen of England, in which country also she would doubtless have restored the Roman Catholic religion. It seemed very likely that she might succeed in both these aims, but her whole career was soon blighted by her own misguided conduct.

Darnley proved a foolish, disagreeable youth, whose only merits were being able to play the violin and to dance well. In a fit of jealousy, he murdered Rizzio, an Italian musician, and a favourite of the queen. Mary was naturally horror-struck, but she seemed ere long to forgive



HOLYROOD PALACE.

him, and a son was not long afterwards born, the seal of their union. She had, however, found another favourite in the bold, bad Earl of Bothwell.

On the night of the 9th of February, a terrible event occurred. Darnley was staying near Edinburgh, at a house called Kirk o' Field. About ten o'clock the queen left him to attend a wedding dance at Holyrood Palace. At two o'clock next morning an awful explosion was heard. The house of Kirk o' Field had been destroyed. Darnley lay dead under a tree!

"Who did the deed?" asked Scotland. "Who but Bothwell," was replied, "who had charge of the house, his soldiers filling its apartments, and himself watching in the neighbourhood?"

Very tardily the queen allowed him to be tried, and a few weeks later she married him!

The people now cried "Shame" on Mary. Ballads were composed and sung in the streets about her. Of these one verse thus quaintly runs—

"Were I a hound, and if she were a hare,
And I a cat, and she a little mouse,
And she a bairn, and I a wild-wood bear,
I a ferret, and she a cuniculus,[1]
To her, I shall be aye contrairie."

She was brought to Edinburgh like a captive, and as she was led through the streets on horseback, a banner was carried before her on which was depicted her murdered husband. Crowds surrounded her, yelling and shouting at her as a murderess. "The women were most mad against her, but, indeed, the men were mad enough." Arrived at the house where she was to spend the night, the mob gathered under her window, from whence in her rage she hurled words of defiance at them. Her life was not safe in the city, and she was therefore quickly removed to Lochleven Castle, situated in the midst of a small lake, where the sound of quiet waters alone broke the perfect repose.

Mary twice attempted to escape thence, and the second time successfully. She rallied her friends and soldiers around her, but their efforts were in vain. She was obliged to fly. Ninety-two miles she rode without a pause! She crossed the Solway, and never stopped till she reached the gates of Carlisle Castle, which readily admitted her.

It was an evil day for Elizabeth and for England when she crossed the border! Any other woman's spirit would have been crushed by such shame and misfortune! Not so the dauntless heart of Mary. She set herself to win Queen Elizabeth's favour, who, while refusing to see her unless she could clear herself of complicity in the murder of her husband, yet for many years protected her life. She would not allow her to return to Scotland, when her angry subjects would have destroyed her. She repeatedly rejected the advice of her statesmen to destroy her, when, as years went by, men forgot her crimes and only remembered her beauty and her misfortunes, when

[1] *Cuniculus*, a rabbit.

plot after plot was made by the English Roman Catholics in her favour. The danger to Elizabeth was great. "We will make Elizabeth whine like a whipped cur," wrote the Scotch plotter, Maitland. In 1572 a very serious conspiracy broke out in the north of England. It was put down with severity, and it is reported that two hundred Romish priests were then put to death as participators in it.

In the night of the 24th of August 1572, the fearful Massacre of St. Bartholomew took place in France, when, as midnight tolled in Paris,

LOCHLEVEN CASTLE.

a bell was rung, and armed bands fell upon the Protestants, and murdered men, women, and children, till the streets ran with blood.

Philip II. of Spain heard of the butchery, and is said to have laughed!

The Pope heard of it, and celebrated the event with a service of thanksgiving to Heaven, and ordered medals to be struck in commemoration of the destruction of heretics!

Elizabeth and her people heard of it, and received the French ambassadors in robes of mourning and in silence.

Then the English again clamoured for the death of Mary, and again Elizabeth would not allow it. It was not till a detestable plot against her life appeared likely to have nearly succeeded, that she at last yielded to their demand.

Two Jesuits had some time before gone to Rome to consult the Pope as to whether it would be lawful to take the life of a heretical sovereign. The Holy Father gave a cautiously worded answer that it would be lawful. One of these gentlemen was John Ballard. He determined to assassinate Elizabeth, and was joined in his plot by Anthony Babington and a band of young Roman Catholics. Mary was informed of their schemes, and a plan was arranged with her for her escape from Fotheringay Castle, where she then lived. But the conspiracy was discovered, and Mary's correspondence proved her share in it. Elizabeth was forced to yield to the clamour of her statesmen and people, and reluctantly signed the death-warrant.

Mary died as courageously as she had lived. Even now, one can scarcely read untouched the account of the last scene, Robed in black, with her prayer-book in her hand, she calmly approached the scaffold, saying to her weeping ladies, "Do not weep. Tell my friends that I die a good Catholic."

Opinions are to this day somewhat divided as to the extent of her complicity in the murder of her husband. It cannot be forgotten, however, that she married his murderer. She likewise settled a pension on the wretch who assassinated her half-brother, the Regent of Scotland. We may pity her for her misfortunes, and still more for the bad influences which surrounded her in her youth, but her gracefulness and her sorrows should never make us forget her crimes. It is weak and foolish to allow a sentimental admiration of beauty to deaden our horror of guilt.

Amongst the last letters written by Mary on the night preceding her death was one to Philip II. of Spain, urging him to invade England and dethrone Elizabeth!

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE ARMADA, A.D. 1588.

PHILIP II. of Spain hardly needed the dying charge of Mary Queen of Scots to invade England. He had long been preparing to do so. The Spanish nation was then the most powerful in the world, and its fleet the largest. The navy hardly existed in England as a profession. But there were brave sea-captains who fitted out vessels at their own expense, and explored unknown seas. Thus Hawkins coasted Africa, and visited Newfoundland; Drake had been round the world; Winter had baffled the French fleet at Leith.

Those were wild days. Although England and Spain were nominally at peace, English sea-captains pounced upon rich Spanish galleons[1] whenever they could, and brought their spoil home; and Spanish commanders only too often took English ships as prizes, and threw the sailors into the dreadful dungeons of the Inquisition, where they remained till death, or were burnt alive, unless they gave up their Protestant religion, and their allegiance to their queen.[2]

Many thought this state of things was worse than open war.

At last the Great Armada, or Spanish fleet, sailed from Lisbon out of the Tagus. (Portugal then belonged to Spain.) There were 136 ships, 8746 sailors, besides 2088 galley-slaves, and an army of 21,639 men. There were likewise 600 priests, 290 monks, and a legate of the Pope's, who carried a letter calling on all good English Catholics to forsake Elizabeth and welcome the Spaniards. An abundance of crucifixes, images, and consecrated banners completed the equipments.

[1] A man-of-war with three or four decks, navigated with sails and oars, which were often worked by slaves.

[2] Cecil stated that in one year twenty-six Englishmen were burnt in Spain. Out of seventy-one of Sir J. Hawkins's captured sailors, only three refused to give up their faith when placed under the terrible rack. Noble three!

In the afternoon of the 3rd of July, Admirals Drake and Frobisher were playing a game of bowls on the Hoe at Plymouth, when news was brought that the Armada was in sight! A stir and commotion arose, but Drake called out, "Stay! There is time to finish the game and beat the Spaniards too!" They did finish the game, and then, amid squally weather, made for their ships.

On came the Armada, a splendid sight, sweeping slowly forward in the form of a broad crescent. Then followed a wonderful week, upon every day, upon almost every hour of which hung the fate of England.

July 21, Sunday.—On came the big Spanish ships "like Thames barges filled with hay." But the little low English ships sailed two feet to their one, and shot in and out amongst them like magic. The English Admiral ran along the whole line firing his broadsides, back, and over the whole course again.

On this day, too, Pedro Valdez, the only captain who knew the Channel, lost his ship, and was taken prisoner, and another Spanish vessel was blown up by some one on board.

July 22, Monday.—Two Flemish pilots forsook the Spaniards and went off to the English, leaving the invaders terribly at a loss for guidance.

July 23, Tuesday. — The English nearly took another great Spanish ship, but had to let her go for want of ammunition.

July 24, Wednesday.—The English could do nothing for want of powder.

July 25, Thursday. — Lord Howard, in his ship, *The Ark*, attacked the Spanish flagship, but *The Ark* was injured. The Spaniards chased her, but she slipped away safely.

And now the Spaniards began to be afraid of the English, and of the torrents of shot which their little ships poured into the huge Spanish vessels, glancing away themselves unhurt.

July 26, Friday.—The English were very short of provisions. They had made three weeks' fare last seven weeks.

July 27, Saturday.—The Duke of Medina Sidonia made for Calais on the French coast.

July 28, Sunday.—The English, unable to attack the whole fleet at anchor, in dead of night sent off eight fireships amongst them.

In sudden dismay the Spanish fleet dispersed.

July 29, Monday.—Afraid to encounter the English again in the Channel, the Spaniards made for the North Sea, and determined to go round the north coasts of Scotland and Ireland. Terrible weather set in. Many of their vessels were wrecked on those wild rocky coasts, and hundreds of sailors were murdered by the fierce Irish peasants.

There was one ship whose captain, De Leyva, had been so esteemed in Spain, that the tenderest Spanish mothers were glad to commit their sons to his care. Twice wrecked, after fearful sufferings from hunger, that ship with all its crew went down. One cannot but feel a thrill of compassion for the gallant lads thus sacrificed to their sovereign's ambition.

At last the Duke of Medina Sidonia reached Spain with only a third of his great fleet, and with his sailors in a fearful state of disease.

King Philip in gloomy despair shut himself up in his palace, and none dared speak to him.

Meanwhile England slowly learned her great deliverance. On the 4th of August Elizabeth reviewed her army at Tilbury, and spoke such stirring words to them that they felt they had indeed, as she said, "a queen who might be broken, but could not be made to bend." Their courage, however, was not to be tried. The navy had saved England.

On the 20th of August a thanksgiving service was held; but the chief celebration of the event was on Sunday, the 24th of November. Then Elizabeth drove in a chariot, drawn by four white horses, to St. Paul's, and queen and people joined together in a solemn service of praise and thanksgiving.

Truly, if ever there was a national deliverance, this was one, "stormy winds fulfilling the word" of the Most High.

A medal was struck bearing the motto: "The Lord sent forth His blasts, and they were scattered."

Thus ended the so-called Invincible Armada.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ELIZABETH, A.D. 1558 TO A.D. 1603.

ENGLAND made a wonderful leap forward in every branch of national life during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The credit of this was largely due to her great Minister, Cecil, Lord Burleigh, who worked for forty years faithfully at her side. By wise regulations, commerce, which had drooped in the days of Mary, rapidly revived. A brisk trade went on with the Low Countries in wool and cloth; jewels, drugs, and tapestries coming back in return. The Royal Exchange was built for the merchants of London by Sir T. Gresham at his own expense. Elizabeth was "proud of the wild adventures of her sailors," who made out new lines of commerce for their country. A trading company with Turkey and another with East India were formed. At home, busy fairs made Salisbury, Bristol, Oxford, and other towns scenes of life and stir. Agriculture also throve. By better tillage one acre was made to yield as much as two before. More meat was eaten in the farms.

> "Beef, mutton, and pork, shred pies of the best,
> Pig, veal, goose and capon, and turkey well drest."

In the long peace, houses were no longer built like castles to stand a siege, but for happy homes, with plenty of windows for light. Gentlemen were richer, and no longer needed to have salaries paid for their attendance on Parliament. Travellers explored distant lands, and made social intercourse lively with their tales on their return. All at once literature broke forth into a springtide of glory! England became "a land of singing birds." Fletcher, Marlow, and Daniel produced vigorous plays. Sir Philip Sidney wrote as a master in

prose and verse. Spenser surprised the world with his *Faerie Queene*, telling of the "lovely ladie" Una and her strange attendant.

"The lyon would not leave her desolate,
But with her went along, as a strong guard
Of her chast person, and a faythfull mate
Of her sad troubles, and misfortunes hard:
Still when she slept, he kept both watch and ward:
And, when she wak'd, he wayted diligent,
With humble service to her will prepared:
From her fayre eyes he took commandement,
And ever by her lookes, conceived her intent."

Last and greatest of all, the Evening Star of her reign, William Shakespeare appeared.

Nor were history and philosophy, the graver sisters of poetry, neglected. Sir Francis Bacon wrote his *Essays*, and Hooker his *Ecclesiastical Polity*.

Elizabeth, although, as she herself said, "she was no angel," loved her people. They felt this, and, at least during the greater part of her reign, passionately adored her. At meals they sang such distiches as these:

"Lord, longe preserve in peace and health
Our gracious Queen Elizabeth;"

or—

"Thy Church defende;
The Queen God save;
God grant we keep
Those friends we have."

Houses, with most unique loyalty, were often built on a ground plan in the shape of her initial letter E! But, as time advanced, ever and anon shadows fell on this glory.[1] Elizabeth was naturally imperious, in great and small matters. "Not that chapter!" she called out once to an officiating priest. "I have read it before. Choose

[1] Amongst the pictures in the recent Tudor Exhibition is an interesting memorial of these "golden days of Queen Bess." It is one presented by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Francis Walsingham. In the background appear Henry VIII. and his successors, Edward VI. and Mary. In the foreground stands Elizabeth, upright and radiant, and behind her are the allegorical figures of Peace and Plenty. At the foot of the picture is inscribed in gold letters:

"The Queen to Walsingham this Tablet sente,
Marke of her Peoples and Her Owne Contente."

another!" She punished severely when her will was thwarted. She was bitterly disappointed that people were not contented with the measure of religious liberty which she had doled out to them. She began her reign proclaiming that men and women should not be punished for their opinions, if they would only, like good children, go to their parish church. But the Pope forbade them to do this. A party called the Puritans arose also, who desired the English Church to become still more Protestant than it was, and some of whom proclaimed that Episcopacy was sinful, and wished to introduce Presbyterianism in its stead. Such an idea as that of churches and chapels standing side by side, their several congregations peacefully assembling and dispersing, had entered no one's brain in those days! Elizabeth, out of patience with opposition, took some steps in the evil line of persecution, both of Papists and Puritans, and two Anabaptists were actually burnt. Foxe, the historian, was almost the only person who dared to entreat her to refrain from such acts. She also instituted a High Court of Commission to examine into the state of religion, and this became a most evil legacy to the country.

From time to time also she took some very arbitrary measures in civil government, but she had always the tact to see when the people were seriously opposed to her wishes, and would then yield with a grace which increased their love for her.

She is accused of being deceitful, but we may remember that deceit was the weapon usual in the politics of those days, and in her youth the Spanish Ambassador, no friendly critic, said of her, "She is not a good dissembler, for she laughs too much."

In early days she had exercised strict economy to avoid the unpopularity of laying additional taxes on the people. This thriftiness became at last almost a miserly parsimoniousness.

At last old age closed upon her. That period, trying to all, is most so to those who have been the most proud and independent. Though only in her seventieth year, her mind began to fail. She sat long hours brooding over her strange and wonderful past. She had wept when Cecil died, tears he well deserved. Other favourites had

passed away. Essex, by his wild career, had brought a sentence of death on himself. "I found her," said one, "with a golden cup in her hand, but she needed it not, her heart was so full of thoughts." She who had been so brave trembled at the rustling of the tapestry, and kept a drawn sword at her side. As her weakness increased, she lay supported by pillows on the floor, doubtless more at ease there than on the high, hard bed, into which she was with difficulty persuaded to return, shrewdly feeling she should never leave it again alive. "Ah, little man, little man!" she said to the younger Cecil; "thou art so presumptuous because thou knowest that I shall die." They asked her who was to succeed her, and she answered, with a gleam of her old spirit, "No rascal" (meaning no common man) "shall succeed me." When again pressed on the subject, and no longer able to speak, she raised her thin hands and shaped them crown-wise on her brow. It was evident that the King of Scotland was her appointed heir.

While she could, she followed the Archbishop of Canterbury in prayer. Who knows but that she had often felt

> "These thronging things of time—this state belov'd,
> Mine England, mine own England, is so dear,
> My heart, alas! has barely room for heaven!"

Be this as it may, the simple words of prayer, suitable to the lowest peasant, suit alike a dying monarch. She expired on the 24th of March, at three o'clock in the morning. She was buried in Westminster, 1500 persons, in deep mourning, voluntarily following her body to the grave.

CHAPTER XXIX.

JAMES I., A.D. 1603–1625—HIS ACCESSION—THE GUNPOWDER PLOT.

Elizabeth, one of the greatest of English sovereigns, was now succeeded by James, one of the most peculiar. His previous history, his character, his circumstances, and even his personal appearance, were most singular. Born in June 1566, the only child of Mary Queen of Scots and of the Earl of Darnley, his father was murdered, and he was proclaimed king when he was little more than a year old. His mother, compelled to fly for her life to England, he never saw again. Two of the Regents, in whose care he and Scotland were placed, were murdered within five years (A.D. 1567–1571). Three years later another Regent was executed. In 1582, now a youth of sixteen, James was carried off by some of his insolent nobles; and as he burst into tears, on finding himself a captive, one of them tauntingly said, "Let him weep on! Better bairns should weep than bearded men!" In the following year he cleverly contrived to make his escape. Amid such stormy scenes, no wonder he grew up jealous of the power of those around him, and determined, if possible, to hold the reins of government firmly in his own hands.

Although never acknowledged by Elizabeth as her heir until she lay on her deathbed, yet James had always counted on succeeding her upon the throne of England. As soon, therefore, as he heard of her death, he was impatient to enter that "Land of Promise," as he called it. He was too poor, however, to begin the journey till Cecil sent him money. Crossing the Border, he fired off a piece of cannon with his own hands at Berwick, in honour of the joyful occasion. He then proceeded more leisurely through the country, amusing himself with

hunting on the way, and with creating new knights, two hundred of whom he had made before he reached Whitehall.

The English were greatly astonished at the habits of their new sovereign. He would either lie in bed most of the day, or spend it in hunting, saying he would rather even go back to Scotland than be tied to the Council Chamber. Sometimes he would appear dressed all over in garments green as the grass, with a little feather in his cap, and a horn instead of a sword by his side. He was by no means dignified in person. "His legs," we are told, "were too weak to carry his body; his tongue was too large for his mouth; his eyes were large, rolling, and vacant." He was by nature timid, and wore a thickly-wadded dagger-proof doublet. Hence some would talk of their "late *King* Elizabeth, and of their *Queen* James!" Yet he was by no means without ability. He often said witty things, and was not wanting in clearness of judgment. He had been very learnedly educated by a celebrated Scotchman, George Buchanan; but this only won him the title of "the most learned fool in Christendom." His love of peace was, perhaps, his best characteristic; yet he almost drifted into war with France and with Spain.

Three plots disturbed the early part of his reign, the first two being closely connected together. The first was called "the Bye Plot," and was easily put down. In the second, styled "the Main Plot," the great Sir Walter Raleigh was accused of taking part. He had been one of Elizabeth's brilliant courtiers, had travelled in the New World, and won a province for her, which he called, in her honour, Virginia. He was condemned to be executed, and Lords Cobham and Grey and Sir Walter Markham were sentenced to share his fate. The last three, by James's orders, were actually brought to the scaffold, and, kneeling there, had tasted the bitterness of death, when suddenly they were reprieved. Raleigh remained thirteen years in the Tower, and occupied himself there, partly with chemical experiments, partly in writing a history of the world for the use of James's son, Prince Henry, who loved him, and said that "no one but his father would keep such a bird in a cage."

The third conspiracy was the famous Gunpowder Plot. James

had begun his reign with promises of protection to the Papists; but he soon changed his tone, partly to please the nation, partly because he was shrewd enough to discover that submission to the Pope does not promote perfect obedience to a sovereign. A plot was therefore contrived by Catesby, a soldier, Winter, Tresham, Digby, and Fawkes, gentlemen, and all ardent Romanists, and encouraged by Father Garnet, a priest, to blow up King James and his Parliament together. After many months of preparation, all was in readiness. The great day, the 5th of November, approached. The conspiracy was on the eve of success, when anxiety to save a relative led Tresham to send a warning letter to Lord Monteagle, who forthwith sent it to Cecil, the Prime Minister.

On Monday, the 4th of November A.D. 1605, Lord Monteagle and Lord Suffolk inspected the vaults beneath the House of Lords. There they saw, standing in a corner, "a very tall and desperate fellow." He said he was "a servant to Mr. Percy, and was looking after his master's coals." "Your master," said the courtiers, "has laid in a good stock of coals!" They retired. Next morning, Tuesday, the 5th of November, Guy Fawkes undid the door of the cellar and looked about him. In a minute he was seized and pinioned, none too quickly, for, had he only had time to light a match, they would all have been blown up together! In the cellar were discovered thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, and on Fawkes' person a watch, and touchwood, tinder, and slow-matches, evidently prepared to ignite the powder.

Thus, by God's good providence, was this desperate plot discovered and disconcerted. The conspirators were all either executed, or slain when defending themselves from being taken prisoners.

In 1618, Sir Walter Raleigh, after failing in an expedition to obtain treasure for the king in America, was by him put to death, on the old sentence of fifteen years before! The fine old man, sixty-seven years of age, felt the axe's edge, and said, with a smile, "This is a sharp remedy, but it will cure all diseases." He laid his head across the block; the executioner hesitated. "What dost thou fear?" said he; "strike, man!" The headsman struck, and Raleigh was no more.

HOUSE OF THE CONSPIRATORS AT LAMBETH
To the right honurable the Lord mowteagle
SUPERSCRIPTION OF THE LETTER TO LORD MONTEAGLE
Guydo fawkes
THE AUTOGRAPHS OF GUIDO FAUKES BEFORE AND AFTER TORTURE
VAULT BENEATH THE OLD HOUSE OF LORDS

THE GUNPOWDER PLOT—GUY FAWKES.—*From an old Picture.*

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CHAPTER XXX.

JAMES I., A.D. 1603–1625—KING AND PEOPLE AT VARIANCE.

Who would have thought that out of Presbyterian Scotland would have come a king who was bitterly opposed to all non-Episcopal sects?[1] Yet so it was. "I have lived amongst this sort of men" (Presbyterians) "ever since I was ten years old," he said; "but, though I lived among them, I was not of them." "No bishop, no king," was one of his favourite sayings.

A famous conference was held with the Puritans at Hampton Court. They were naturally somewhat abashed in argument with their sovereign, who, for his part, was highly pleased with his own speeches on the occasion. "I peppered them soundly," he recorded, "and they fled from argument to argument like schoolboys." He wound up by declaring that "he would *harry*" (that is, worry) "them out of the land;" and, in fact, multitudes of Nonconformists fled to Holland, and thence to North America, where they founded a New England, now part of the United States. Brave and godly men mostly were these "Pilgrim Fathers." "It is not with us as with men whom small things can discourage," said they, deeply though they felt their exile. "Farewell, dear England!" they cried, as its shores faded from their sight; and England, though she knew it not, could ill afford to lose them!

James I. had ideas of his own concerning the position, rights, and duties of a king. He desired what he called a "Free and Absolute Monarchy;" by which terms he meant a monarchy in which the king

[1] Presbyterianism is a system of Church government by *presbyters* or elders; Episcopacy is Church government by *episcopoi* or bishops.

should be "free" to rule as he pleased, and should be responsible to God alone for his actions. The duty of a king, he maintained, was to govern. The duty of the people was simply to obey him. The king, he said, was the father of his people, and his subjects should submit to him as children to their parents, even should he misrule them. "In case the father hated and wronged the children never so much, will any man," he asked, "with the least spark of reason, think it lawful for them to meet him with the like? Yes, supposing the father were seriously following his sons with a drawn sword, is it lawful for them to turn and strike again, or make any resistance but by flight?" Again, the king is the head, the nation, the body. "It may very well fall out that the head may be forced to cut off some rotten member, but what state can the body be in if the head be cut off?" "All the rebellion Elijah the prophet raised against the tyrant Ahab was but to fly to the wilderness, where, for fault of sustentation, he was fed by the corbies" (crows). "The king," he laid down, "is above the law, as both the author and giver of strength thereto."[1]

Such sentiments surprised and startled the English nation. They hastened, by the mouth of the Speaker of the House of Commons, to protest against them. They repeated the saying of Hooker, "The king maketh not the law, but the law the king." They pointed out to him that in England the power of the monarch had always been limited by that of the Parliament, and though the nation had bowed in fear or in love to many despotic acts of Henry VIII., Mary, and Elizabeth, yet even these proud sovereigns had never dared to question the rights of the nation as expressed in Parliament.

"Two cannot walk together except they be agreed." King James was set upon making himself absolute. The nation was determined to resist him, and to maintain its ancient rights. Hence his whole reign was spent in contention with his people. His first Parliament he dismissed in a rage. His second fared no better. Having dared to present him with a statement of grievances, he hastily dismissed it, after two months' sitting, during which time not

[1] See *Basilikon Doron, or His Majestie's Instructions to his dearest Son, Henry the Prince*, by King James.

a single Act was passed. Hence it was nicknamed "The Addled Parliament."

Parliaments were, in fact, most disagreeable institutions in the eyes of James. "Hold no Parliament," he advised his son, "but for necessity of new laws, which be seldom; for few laws and well put in execution are best in a well ruled commonweal."

For seven years James ruled without a Parliament. Two Courts equally hateful to the people were the instruments of his sway, the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission. Cases of all descriptions were brought before the Star Chamber, which had power to fine, imprison, mutilate, and try by the rack, the accused often not being allowed to defend themselves. The Court of High Commission dealt chiefly with religious matters, and it also had power to punish by fines, imprisonment, and torture.

James ruled also by proclamations. These he issued frequently in the style of a Pharaoh or a Nebuchadnezzar, expecting them to be obeyed as unquestioningly as if they were the law of the land.

Many acts of oppression deepened the discontent of the people. For instance, a Somersetshire clergyman named Peacham was condemned to death on account of a sermon written by him, but which he had not even preached, in which he protested against the extravagance of the court. The poor old man died in prison.

Of all men, judges are rightly expected to be most independent. But James dared to imprison even Coke, the Chief Justice of England, and to deprive him of his office.

But even "free" kings cannot do without money. James was extravagant. His worthless favourites, Carr and Villiers, helped him to get rid of his riches. His debts at one time amounted to £18,000. He was compelled, therefore, to summon a third Parliament. The members were in no docile mood. They asserted their freedom of speech, which he had attacked. They refused the subsidies he demanded. They drew up a Protestation against "abuses." This so enraged James, that, sending for the Records of the Commons, with his own hands, in presence of the Council, he tore the record of the Protestation out. Who does not recall a similar scene in ancient days,

when the Jewish king Jehoiakim, seizing the roll of warning written by the prophet Jeremiah, cut it up and threw it into the flames? The result was alike in either case. "Take thee another roll," said the Lord of Hosts, "and write in it all the former words . . . and there were added beside them *many like words.*"[1] The more this British Jehoiakim "resisted the just demands of his subjects," the more "like words" were addressed to him, and in his fourth and last Parliament he was compelled to yield to them in one important point. He signed a Bill against monopolies, one of the royal privileges which had become oppressive to the nation, and which limited the right to sell many articles only to persons who paid heavily for it to the king.

James died a few months afterwards, on the 27th of March 1625, leaving to his son, besides a war with Spain, "an empty treasury and a crown of thorns."

[1] Jer. xxxvi. 9, 27, 28.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CHARLES I., A.D. 1625–1648—KING AND COMMONS AT VARIANCE.

JAMES I. had two sons.[1] Henry, the elder, was a fine, promising youth, whose sympathy with the people might have enabled England to obtain liberty without a civil war, had his life been spared. But when only eighteen, he caught cold, and died, after a few days' illness, on the 6th of November 1612. His brother Charles then became Prince of Wales, and on the death of James succeeded to the throne, at the age of twenty-five.

Charles I. was superior to his father in many respects, while inferior to him in shrewdness and sagacity. We are told that "he was temperate and serious, and that courtiers who did not quite abandon sinful ways, yet so reverenced the king as to retire into corners to practise them." His tastes were refined; he encouraged men of learning, and "was a great lover of paintings." But his character, like a beautiful cup of porcelain, which is rendered useless by one or two cracks, was marred by some great failings. He was so obstinate, that "the courtiers were in his youth wont to pray that he might be in the right way when he was set, for if he was in the wrong way, he would prove the most wilful of any kings that ever reigned." Worse than this, he was not trustworthy. He would lightly make promises, but slackly perform his word. This grave fault early showed itself, when he and

[1] "When as yet only King of Scotland, James I. married, Nov. 24, 1589, at Oslo, now a suburb of Christiania, Anne, sister of Christian IV. of Denmark. She had previously gone through the ceremony of marriage with Earl Marshall Keith, as proxy for the King, at the Castle of Cronberg; but on the way to Scotland the Danish ships, driven by storms to the coast of Norway, landed the Princess at Oslo. With great gallantry King James came over to fetch her with a large fleet, and remained at Oslo, after his marriage there by Robert Bruce, the King's chaplain, the 21st Jan. 1590, when he sailed with his bride for Copenhagen."—*History of Scottish Expedition to Norway, by Michell.*

his favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, went off to Spain, that he might see and win a Spanish princess for his bride. He professed ardent affection to her, made all sorts of promises of protection to the Papists for her sake, allowed her to be styled Princess of Wales, and to trouble her southern tongue to learn our English language till the very day he crossed the border to return home. Then he immediately broke off the match, and urged his father to make war with Spain, on the plea that the Spanish king would not join with him in war against Austria.

In politics Charles was altogether his father's son. He at once took up the struggle with the House of Commons where James had left it, and exceeded him in the severity of his measures and the bitterness of his words. "My father scourged you with whips, but I will scourge you with scorpions," appeared to be his motto. Yet, to do him justice, we must remember that in seeking to be an "absolute king," he was not desiring power simply for his own gratification. He was deeply religious, and he considered it a sacred duty to maintain every prerogative ever enjoyed by a king of England. He would not allow that the House of Commons, which had originally granted these prerogatives, might withdraw them when they were found to be seriously injurious to the nation; nor was he conscious how selfish it was in such circumstances to wish to retain them.

In the early years of his reign he was completely under the influence of the Duke of Buckingham. "Who rules the nation?" was a popular saying. "The king." "And who rules the king?" "The Duke of Buckingham." "And who rules the Duke of Buckingham?" "The devil." "Tush!" the duke was reported to have said; "it makes no matter what the Commons or Parliament doth; for without my leave and authority they shall not be able to touch the hair of a dog."

Buckingham was clever and accomplished, but selfish and incapable as a politician. On account of mere personal pique, he did not shrink from plunging his country into war with Spain and France in succession. One act of his especially exasperated every honest Englishman. Having concluded a truce with the King of France, he

promised to help him against his Protestant subjects; but, knowing how unpopular this would be in England, the soldiers were enlisted under the pretence that they were to be sent to Genoa. When they discovered that, instead of this, they were meant to join in the siege of the Protestant city of La Rochelle, their indignation was great, and they utterly refused to fight.

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At last the House of Commons resolved upon Buckingham's overthrow. Sir John Eliot had the courage to lead the attack. He impeached him before the House of Peers. "My lords," he exclaimed, "you have seen his power, and some, I fear, have felt it. By him come all the evils; in him we find the cause." While he spoke, Buck-

ingham stood by, erect and smiling, sparkling with jewels, and strong in his confidence in the protection of his sovereign.

Charles, in great wrath, sent Sir John Eliot to the Tower, but was compelled to release him after a few days, as the Commons refused to go on with any business till he was at liberty. Then he indignantly dismissed Parliament, replying to the Peers, who begged for a short delay, "No, not an hour."

This early dissolution was very inconvenient to Charles himself, for it left him without any supplies. He therefore demanded a loan from the people. This was no new thing. Henry VIII. borrowed largely from the nation, and the House of Commons obligingly released him from the obligation to pay his debts. Elizabeth likewise asked for loans, but she early and honourably repaid them. "Benevolences," or so-called gifts, were also "gently solicited." Both loans and benevolences, however, were merely taxes laid without consent of Parliament, and it was well known that any subject withholding his offering would have to suffer for it. So it was now. Several gentlemen, amongst whom one Thomas Wentworth was conspicuous, refused to subscribe to the loan, and were therefore sent to prison.

Charles found himself obliged to summon Parliament again on the 17th of March 1628. It was not ungenerous to him. It voted him large subsidies, but this seemed to him only meant to sugar the bitter pills they had in store for him. They impeached Buckingham again, and they presented to him, through Sir John Eliot, the famous "Petition of Right," which is, next to Magna Carta, the greatest bulwark of national liberty. Sir John Coke, Chief Justice, proposed it. "Let us," said he, "put up a Petition of Right." Accordingly the Commons drew one up, and sent it to the Lords, who sent it back with an additional clause: "We humbly present this petition to your Majesty, not only with a care of preserving our liberties, but with due regard to leave entire that *sovereign power* with which your Majesty is entrusted for the protection, safety, and happiness of your people."

But the Commons knew of no "sovereign power" which could have any right to interfere with the rights of Englishmen. They rejected the clause. "What is sovereign power?" they said. "Let us

give that to the king the law gives him, and no more." "Magna Charta," said Sir Edward Coke, "is such a fellow that he will have no sovereign;" that is, to control or interfere with him. "We say no more," said Sir Henry Martyn, "than what a worm trodden on would say if he could speak—'*I pray tread on me no more.*'"

In fact, the famous petition did little beyond enumerating infringements of the old rights secured in Magna Carta, and insisting anew upon them. "There is nothing new in this," said King Charles; and he signed it. It would, alas! have been a new thing had he ruled afterwards in accordance with it.

Charles again interfered to protect Buckingham. He hastily prorogued Parliament rather than allow him to be tried.

But the days of Buckingham were numbered. He was soon after this stabbed in the streets of Portsmouth by a fanatic named Felton. The news was whispered to Charles while attending service in chapel. "His countenance changed not till the prayers were ended, when he departed to his chamber, and with abundance of tears lamented the loss of his servant and the horrid manner of his end."

Yet was the tragic death of Villiers less terrible than the fate which awaited his opponent, Sir John Eliot.

The king continuing, in spite of the Petition of Right, to levy "tonnage and poundage" without consent of Parliament, Sir John Eliot once more stepped forth as the champion of liberty. He presented a "Remonstrance" to the king on behalf of the Parliament. This, the first "Remonstrance," was only passed in the House of Commons after a very stormy scene.

Finch, the Speaker, refused to read it or put it to the vote. He was forcibly held in his chair while Sir John read it. The door of the House was locked lest any member should leave before the Bill was passed.

The reply of Charles to this Remonstrance was the instant dissolution of Parliament, with the threat that "the vipers amongst the Commons should meet with their reward," and, accordingly, the committal of Eliot and Valentine to the Tower. There Sir John Eliot remained between three and four years. His health declined, and he craved

permission of the king to go home for a time, if but to gain strength to return to prison and bear the rest of his sentence. Charles refused; his petition, he said, was not humble enough. Feeling death approaching, Sir John wrote a second petition. This the Lieutenant of the Tower refused to forward, repeating the words of the king, "It is not humble enough." He told Eliot to write another. This the patriot said he might think of when he was better. "His spirits had grown feeble and faint." On the 27th of November 1632 he died in the Tower. His son craved permission from the king to carry his father's body into Cornwall to be buried amongst his forefathers; but Charles made answer, "Let Sir John Eliot's body be buried in the church of that parish where he died;" and accordingly it was thrust into an obscure corner of the Tower church.

Thus perished the first two victims of the civil strife, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the arrogant darling of the sovereign, and Sir John Eliot, the self-sacrificing champion of the nation.

CHAPTER XXXII.

CHARLES I., A.D. 1629–1638—THE TYRANNY.

CHARLES never again had a favourite whom he loved as he had loved Buckingham, the unwise but brilliant friend of his youth. Two remarkable men, however, became his principal counsellors and supporters. These were William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Thomas Wentworth, who was created Earl of Strafford.

Laud, when about thirty-three years of age, was introduced to James I., and to please Buckingham was made Bishop of Bath and Wells, although the old king foresaw that he would prove a troublesome man to his country. "He hath a restless spirit," he said, "which cannot see when things are well, but loveth to toss and change and to bring matters to a pitch of reformation floating in his brain." This was true, and "the pitch of reformation" at which Laud aimed was simply to root out the Puritan party from the Church of England altogether. Since the days of Elizabeth there had always been two parties within the National Church, those who sympathised with the Reformed Churches abroad, and wished to make the Church at home still more Protestant, and those who would have nothing to do with any non-episcopal Church, and who, while opposed to Popery as a whole, yet held the Romish Church to be a true branch of the Christian community, and who gave to the English clergy a position similar to that of Romish priests abroad. To this latter party Laud belonged, and he was determined to crush every other. With Charles's unwavering support, he succeeded in making himself a sort of pope in the land. Bishops, priests, judges, nobles, magistrates, all classes felt his power, nor was that power rendered popular by any personal

qualities. Though truly pious, he had not learnt to control his temper, which frequently broke out into violent passions upon the slightest contradiction or provocation. "Thorough" was his watch-word and that of Strafford; and this meant, in religion, "thorough" subjection of the laity to the priesthood, and in politics, "thorough" subjection of the nation to the king.

Thomas Wentworth was a very different man. He began public life as a suitor for the favour of Buckingham. Repulsed by him, he threw himself into the popular side. "Since they breathe on me a disgrace," he exclaimed, "in the face of my country, I shall crave leave to wipe it away as openly, as easily." His voice was one of the loudest against the loan demanded by Charles. Together with Pym, he went to prison for refusing to pay it. "If," said he, "he did not faithfully insist for the common liberty of the subject to be preserved whole and entire, it was his desire he might be set as a beacon on a hill for all men else to wonder at." "It is as such a beacon his name has stood from that time to this." After the death of Buckingham he was won over to the side of Charles, and thenceforth no one more bitterly opposed his former friends than he. They keenly felt his forsaking them. "The sin of his great apostasy," said they, "could not be forgiven in this world till he went to another."

Yet, in fact, the heart of Wentworth could never have gone wholly with Eliot and Pym. Proud, scornful, "given to insults," he despised the people. He was more cut out to be what he actually became, "the very embodiment of tyranny." He was made first President of the Council of the North, or governor of the northern counties, and then Lord Deputy of Ireland. Here he had full scope for his "absolutism" as representative of his king. He surrounded himself with royal state; he made all wait upon him. Himself the most punctual man in the empire, he would keep his council for hours waiting his pleasure. By his loud and threatening tones he frightened his audience into compliance. "*Well* spoken it is, good or bad," he wrote to Laud, "I cannot tell whether; but whatever it is, I spake it not betwixt my teeth, but so loud and heartily that I protest to you I was faint withal at the time, and the worst for it for three days after."

He fined a sheriff £1000 for opposing him, and every man of a jury £4000 apiece. For a careless speech about himself, he caused Lord Mountmorris to be dismissed from the army, sent to prison, and sentenced to death. He claimed all Connaught for the king, on the ground that the nobility and landowners could not produce sufficient legal proofs of their titles to their estates. Where Wentworth was, there could be but one tyrant. Therefore at first his rule was of some use in Ireland, which had been at the mercy of many tyrants before. But such a system of "*bullying*" as his could not fail to leave a sting behind, and wherever Strafford went he might be feared, hated, and obeyed, but never was he loved. It were hard to say whether men writhed more under the cool scorn of the Lord Deputy, or under the fiery invectives of the Archbishop.

Such were the men by whose aid Charles ruled without a Parliament for eleven years, from A.D. 1629 to 1640. The period has been styled "The Tyranny," and it deserves the name. It was a tyranny whose oppression was felt throughout every class of the people. Merchants and tradesmen felt it in the taxes laid on all sorts of goods. Gentlemen felt it in the fines wrung from them if they refused to be knighted, and from countless other pretexts. Even widows and orphans felt it, for Government claimed large sums from the wards under their care. But most of all the tyranny pressed upon all those who belonged to the Puritan party, and by the term Puritan came to be understood all who did not share the High Church views of Laud. "If any gentleman maintained the good laws of the land, or stood up for any public interest, he was a Puritan; in short, all that crossed the views of needy courtiers or the proud, encroaching priests, all these were Puritans." James charged his son to "hate a proud Puritan," and now every one was held to be a "proud Puritan" who did not crouch at the feet of Laud.

Those were the days when the courts of High Commission and of the Star Chamber were in all their glory, and the influence of Laud was predominant in both. Among the numerous persons who were "*star-chambered*," as it was called, the following were the most noteworthy :—

1. In 1630, Abraham Leighton, for writing a book against prelacy, was fined £5000 to the king and £3000 to Laud, and to be imprisoned during the king's pleasure.

2. In 1633, for writing a vehement book against the theatre, which was supposed to reflect upon the queen, W. Prynne was fined £5000, sentenced to the pillory, and had both his ears cut off.

3. In A.D. 1637, Bishop Williams, having offended Laud, was condemned to pay £5000 to the king and £3000 to Laud, and to be imprisoned during the sovereign's pleasure.

4. In 1638, for distributing pamphlets against the Bishops, John Selburne, a London apprentice, was severely whipped from the Fleet to Westminster, set in the pillory, and kept in prison three years, till set free by the Parliament.

5. But the case which excited the greatest indignation was that of Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, who were brought before the Star Chamber together in 1637. Burton, a London rector, had published two sermons and a pamphlet charging the Bishop of Norwich with Roman innovations. John Bastwick, a Colchester physician, had published an answer to the Papists, which Laud disapproved. For this he had been fined already £1000 in the High Commission Court, and forbidden to practise medicine. Prynne, the irrepressible Somersetshire gentleman, had again published a pamphlet obnoxious to the Archbishop. Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick were now each fined £5000, condemned to the pillory, to lose their ears, to be branded "S. S." (Sowers of Sedition) on both cheeks, and to be imprisoned for life, without access to friends, books, or writing materials! From their pillories the prisoners harangued the multitude, who admired their constancy, and expressed their disapproval of their punishment by groans and hisses. To put a stop to all expressions of sympathy, Laud ordered the sufferers to be confined separately at Launceston, Carnarvon, and Lancaster. To his amazement, their departure from London, and their whole journey, bore the appearance of a triumphal procession. The roads were crowded with friends and spectators, not less than a hundred thousand gathered together between Smithfield and a little beyond Highgate to see

Burton pass. Laud indignantly fined some persons who showed hospitality to Prynne on his journey, some £500, some £300, and some £250. He blindly thought to crush pity by punishment, forgetting that

> "Sympathy still deeper grows,
> When chidden is the tear that flows."

A tide of indignation was gradually swelling in England, which would ere long sweep away Church and monarchy alike in utter destruction!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CHARLES I., A.D. 1638–1640—JOHN HAMPDEN—THE SHORT PARLIAMENT.

THERE was another voice which counselled Charles to his destruction. It was that of his wife, Henrietta Maria of France, whom he dearly loved. Beautiful and affectionate, but passionate and imperious, she was constantly urging him to make himself "a *real* king, like the other sovereigns of Europe," to rule absolutely, and not yield to the demands of his subjects. But Charles's attempts at absolute rule were singularly unsuccessful.

One of the most unpopular of his proceedings was the imposition of a tax called "Ship-money." Treasurer Noy had found out that once upon a time, when the land was in danger of invasion, seaport towns or counties had been called on to furnish ships at their own expense. This suggested to him a call, which was immediately made in the name of the king, upon all the counties to furnish so-styled ship-money. A difference, however, existed between this tax and the original demand. *Now* there was no danger of invasion, and the money raised was not even employed to build ships! Noy and the king were greatly pleased with the "ship-money," which promised to be "an everlasting supply of all occasions," as much as £700,000 being in fact raised yearly with the help of the book of rates. "The people, on the other hand, received the new tax as their forefathers did one which Henry VIII. had imposed. The poor cursed, the rich repugned, the wits rallied," and in the end "*all* cursed" the originators of it.

Amongst "the rich who refused" to pay it was John Hampden, a

friend of Sir John Eliot, and one in whom a similar high patriotism to his was joined to a calm and far-seeing mind. He was of an old Buckinghamshire family, which could trace its descent from Saxon times, and he was member of Parliament for Wendover. He declined to pay the ship-money because the tax had not been authorised by Parliament. Charles ordered the Crown lawyers to proceed against him. It was a famous trial. Oliver St. John defended Hampden, appealing to Magna Carta. The Crown lawyers appealed to very old precedents, and stoutly maintained that "the king of England is an absolute king." "The king can do no wrong, and therefore this tax could not be wrong." "The law," said Berkeley, "is an old SERVANT of the king."

On the 11th of June 1638, the case was decided, by seven votes being given *against* Hampden, and only two *for* him. This triumph, however, cost the king dear, for the nation was convinced that Hampden was in the right, and that the judges had debased the law and disgraced their high calling in giving their verdict against him.

Hampden, with his friends Pym and Oliver Cromwell, might have been seen one day not long after this defeat, going on board ship to sail to the New World, for what was England to them if no longer a free country? But Charles forbade their departure. Hampden therefore remained, to become the idol of his countrymen, and to be honoured even by his foes, with perhaps one single exception. Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, thought that "*Hampden and his friends should be whipped into their right wits!*"

Charles was as unsuccessful in ruling Scotland as England. He went thither accompanied by Archbishop Laud, and, both of them being convinced that Presbyterianism came from the evil one, they determined to rid the country of so deadly a plague. Episcopacy was introduced with a high hand. On the 23rd of July 1637, the English Liturgy was ordered to be read in St. Giles's, the chief church in Edinburgh. From the moment the service began, nothing was to be heard but groans, hisses, and curses. The women screamed, called the preacher a thief, a child of the devil, and one Jenny Geddes threw a stool at his head.

This disgraceful scene, and the general excitement of which it was one vulgar expression, did not lessen the missionary zeal of Charles and Laud. They continued to insist on bishops and a liturgy, and combated the authority of the National Assembly of the Scotch Church.

Then the Scots devised a scheme which systematised their opposition to Charles, and banded the mass of the people in a Solemn League and Covenant to defend their self-chosen Presbyterian form of Church. We may call their hatred of bishops fanatical, but we must remember that the ardour of Charles and Laud in the defence of bishops was equally fanatical. Christianity without Christ cannot be, but Christianity without bishops has flourished in many a land.

The Scottish character is a singular mixture of argumentativeness and fervid passion. Both these impulses were now in action against Charles. Their preachers argued unceasingly against his opinions, and the people lashed themselves into the wildest enthusiasm of loyalty for their Solemn League and Covenant. Suspecting that he would endeavour to put them down by force, they were beforehand with him, gathered an army with rapidity under the old general, Leslie, and soon forced the king to sign a truce near Berwick.

Charles was now in an unfortunate plight. Scotland in arms against him, England uneasy and angry, he was perplexed what course to take. He summoned Strafford from Ireland to counsel him, and, with unwilling deference to his advice, he summoned his fourth Parliament. It met on the 13th of April, A.D. 1640, and was dissolved on the 11th of the following month, being deservedly known as "The Short Parliament." The story of its short duration was simply that again Charles required subsidies before redressing grievances, while Parliament insisted that it would grant no subsidies till grievances were redressed. May, A.D. 1640, was far from being a "merrie" month in London. It was a time of excitement and trouble. The popular hatred of Archbishop Laud had been rapidly gaining strength. On the 11th of May, his palace at Lambeth was attacked by a tumultuous mob, shouting as they surged along, "No Popery!" "Down with the

bishops!" Laud, however, had had timely warning, and had put his abode in a state of defence. The riot was easily quelled, and the insult was avenged, one luckless youth, a sailor lad, being caught, tried, racked, and hung. He was the last person put to the rack in England.

A few months later, on the 22nd of October, there was another rising. This time the crowd broke into St. Paul's, where the Court of High Commission was sitting. With shouts of "No bishops!" "No Popery!" they streamed into the chapter-house, and forced the members to disperse.

This was the last time the Court of High Commission met. The people were mistaken in calling Laud a Papist, but their mistake was a natural one, for they saw him daily endeavouring to introduce ceremonials which had been discontinued since the Reformation, and they knew that so highly was his friendship for the Romish Church appreciated by the Pope, that he was offered a cardinal's hat!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CHARLES I., A.D. 1640–1648—THE LONG PARLIAMENT—EXECUTION OF THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

BEFORE the end of the year A.D. 1640, Charles was again compelled to summon a Parliament. This was his fifth and last. It was, perhaps, the most remarkable Parliament which ever met in England. "It rose to the greatest majesty and power; it sank to the lowest depth of shame,—at one time sovereign of its sovereign, and at another the servant of its servants." Charles opened it in person, and closed his speech with the words: "It shall not be my fault if this be not a happy and good Parliament." But fair words could not heal the breach which long misrule had made between him and his people. The members took their seats stern and determined in spirit. One of their first acts was to set free the victims of the Star Chamber, Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton, who were welcomed into fresh air and liberty with shouts of enthusiasm.

On the morning of the 11th of November, John Pym stood up in the House of Commons and impeached Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, of high treason. Followed by three hundred members, he went up to the House of Lords with the impeachment. Strafford, infirm, and weary from a long journey, had but just taken his seat among the Peers, when Pym entered. He at once rose, and hurried to the House of Commons. "With speed," wrote an eye-witness, "he comes to the House; he calls rudely at the door, and with a proud, gloomy look makes towards his place at the Bar. But at once many bid him void the House, so he is forced in confusion to go to the door till he is called." He was only recalled to hear his committal to the

Tower. He offered to speak, but was commanded to be gone without a word.

In the Tower, then, where Sir John Eliot had pined three years, the Earl of Strafford waited three months for his trial. Meanwhile his great adversary, John Pym, prepared to substantiate the impeachment.

John Pym and Thomas Wentworth had a few years ago walked together in company as friends. But when the "Grand Apostate" left the party of the patriots, "Never," said Pym, "shall we leave you while you have a head on your shoulders."

John Pym was a Somersetshire squire, who had been in Parliament since A.D. 1614, and had had the honour of imprisonment for opposing monopolies under James. In 1620 he was one of twelve men sent to this monarch with a petition. "Set chairs! set chairs—chairs!" cried the shrewd old king in his broad Scotch accent; "here be twal' (twelve) kings coming." "King Pym," in fact, he came to be popularly called, when his strength of will, experience, and judgment made him a pillar of strength to the national party.

On the 22nd of March 1641, Strafford was brought up from the Tower by water, six barges following, with a hundred soldiers on guard. The king and queen were present in the House. The trial lasted several weeks. Day by day men saw his proud form erect; his dark gloomy eye and sallow face giving no sign of fear. He defended himself very ably, and it is generally allowed that, however guilty *in fact* of treason to his country, there was not *technical* proof legally to convict him. But, notwithstanding this, on Friday, the 9th of May, he was condemned, and the sentence sent up to Charles for his signature.

No power on earth should have induced Charles to sign that death-warrant. He should rather have resigned his crown, for Strafford had been as faithful to him as he had been faithless to Parliament. But Charles, after a vain petition in his favour, gave way, and set his name to the sentence. Well might Strafford exclaim, "Put not your trust in princes." On the 12th of May, "the great bad man" was beheaded on Tower Hill. He marched with proud composure through the crowds; craved the blessing of the imprisoned Archbishop Laud, and died with courage. In the evening the joy of the people at his death was shown

by bonfires. Strafford's name has the sad pre-eminence of his having been the most hated of all English statesmen, from the days of Egbert to those of Victoria.

A year and a half later, Archbishop Laud followed his friend to death by a sentence which can still less be justified than that of Strafford.

The Parliament now carried everything before it. On the 10th of January, A.D. 1641, a Bill was passed securing the meeting of Parliament every three years. On the 5th of July the Courts of High Commission and of the Star Chamber were abolished. Ship-money was abolished. A resolution was passed to help the Scots. Commissioners were sent throughout the country to do away with all the new ornaments and ritual which Laud had been at such pains to introduce. And yet the members were not satisfied. They knew that when abuses are removed, people soon forget how burdensome they were. They saw that popular feeling was not unlikely to soften towards the king, now that he was rid of the obnoxious Strafford. At the same time, they knew that the king hated them, and regarded all concessions made to them as no more binding than promises forced from a man by a highwayman with a knife at his throat. Therefore they determined to secure their position, and to hand down to all time the story of past grievances, and of their efforts to obtain their removal. Accordingly the Grand Remonstrance was drawn up. It was a simple recital of all the oppressive measures of Charles and his Ministers, from the commencement of his reign. Some who had voted against Strafford now fell away from the popular party; amongst these were Lord Falkland and Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon. "The king was down," they thought, "why trample him in the dust?" There was a great struggle in the House. It sat day after day, well into the evenings, and the Bill in favour of the Remonstrance was only passed by a majority of eleven, on the midnight of the 22nd of November, A.D. 1641, after fourteen hours' sitting. A still fiercer debate followed as to whether the document should be printed, but this was also passed. The Grand Remonstrance remains, recording the high-water mark of monarchical oppression in England for all ages.

A few weeks only had passed before Charles sought a great revenge for the death of Strafford, and the galling publication of the Remonstrance. The Parliament had impeached Buckingham early in his reign, and had slain Strafford. He determined to impeach no less than five members of Parliament for treason. Their names were Pym, Hampden, Hollis, Strode, and Hazlerig. He charged them with complicity with the rebellious Scots, and with alienating the affections of the people from their sovereign. On the 3rd of January 1672 he despatched the Sergeant-at-Arms, mace in hand, to the House of Commons, demanding the surrender of the accused five members. The assembly sent back a humble message, that the accused should be ready to answer any legal charges in such manner as befitted the privileges of the House.

Charles, disappointed of the immediate surrender of the five, hesitated what to do. Henrietta Maria did not hesitate. She urged him vehemently to go to the House in person, and seize the accused. Doubting in his heart the safety of the step, believing as he always did her wisdom to be superior to his, he set forth to go to Westminster. The House of Commons was sitting. A painful and anxious debate was being held what steps to take. How could they surrender these men? If they were guilty, their guilt was shared by the majority of the members. Besides, was it not a great breach of their privileges to impeach them in this fashion without the sanction of the House? While they thus deliberated, some one entered the House hurriedly, and whispered words to one of the members, which he instantly reported to the Speaker, Mr. Lenthall. The Speaker quickly rose, and told the House that the king had already left Whitehall, and was on his way hither, accompanied by a large troop of armed men. The five members were instantly charged to depart, which they unwillingly did, young Lord Strode being actually dragged out of the House by a friend, while he protested that he was innocent of treason, and was ready to seal his innocency on the spot with his blood. Scarcely were the five got out of the way ere Charles entered, his officers and soldiers keeping the door of the House. As he entered, all the members rose. He glanced towards the seat of Pym, and, seeing it empty, went on towards the

Speaker's chair, whence he spoke, demanding the surrender of the members. "I must have them," he said, "wherever I find them." He looked round and asked for Pym, for Hollis, but there followed a general silence. No one answered him. "Well, well," he said, "'tis no matter. I think my eyes can see as well as another's;" and then he looked round a pretty while to see if he could espy any one of them. Then up spoke Lenthall, the Speaker, and said, "I have neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak, in this place but as the House do please, and I humbly beg your Majesty to pardon that I cannot give answer but this to what your Majesty is pleased to demand of me." Another long pause of dreadful silence, and Charles again spoke. "Well, since I see all my birds are flown, I do expect from you that you will send them unto me as soon as they return hither."

Then, with overclouded countenance and rising anger, he left the House, cries of "Privilege! privilege!" being shouted after him by many members as he passed forth.

Returning crestfallen to the queen, she angrily upbraided him for his cowardice in not laying hold of other members in lieu of the defaulters. So little did she know of the temper of England, or of the terrible danger of bloodshed, which only the escape of the members had averted, within the walls of Westminster itself!

From that day forward, Charles and his Parliament were virtually at war.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CHARLES I., A.D. 1642–1648—CIVIL WAR—DEATH OF CHARLES.

WHO began the war? Each party was anxious to throw the blame of this on the other; but, in fact, war was inevitable, and in such circumstances only an accident will often determine who shall strike the first blow. In February, A.D. 1642, Henrietta Maria had hurried over to France, carrying the crown jewels with her. In a short time she sent Charles a large sum which she had raised on their security. Soon afterwards Charles left London, and moved towards the north of England. The Mayor of Hull, Sir John Hotham, refused to admit him. On the 12th of July, Parliament ordered an army to be raised, and appointed the Earl of Essex its commander. On the 22nd of August, Charles unfurled his standard at Nottingham.

Now England, which had so long lain in peace, and had been like a well-tilled and beautiful garden, smiling and fruitful, was for four years desolated by civil war. Troops marched and countermarched across her green fields, along her quiet country roads and lanes, where only farmers' carts and heavy-laden harvest waggons had been wont to pass; and worse than all were the "disorderly rabble of rotten-hearted, nauseous neutrals," who soon infested the country, pillaging from all parties alike.

Now the time was come when every man had to choose his side. The choice was not easy. Parliament and national rights on the one side, the monarchy and the Church on the other. Not that the lines were then thus clearly defined, for Charles had promised the people their rights, and the Parliament still professed loyalty to the king, if he would rule according to his promises. Many instinctively felt that,

much as they owed to the Parliament, it was now sending them in too heavy a bill for their gains. On the other hand, many, despairing of ever enjoying liberty under the rule of Charles, thought war against him was a painful necessity. "So amongst all who judged for themselves, soon fathers had to fight against sons, brothers against brothers, intimate friends and neighbours against each other."

Success at first lay with the king, and the first important battle, that of Edgehill, was won by his troops, under command of Prince Rupert. The beginning of A.D. 1643 found him master of the north and west of England But now "a change came o'er the spirit of the dream!" Amongst the Parliamentary officers was a young man belonging to an old Yorkshire family, the Fairfaxes. Fathers, brothers, cousins all fought on the same side, and the most prominent of them was the one known as "Fiery young Tom." The war went raging up and down Yorkshire, across the moors, through the valleys and picturesque glens. "Fiery young Tom" won a hard fight at Tadcaster; took Bradford, took Leeds, but lost it again; won a great battle at Wakefield, but was badly beaten at Advalter Moor, being forced to fly and fall back on Hull, while his wife was taken prisoner, and his little five-year-old daughter Moll had to ride for her life on horseback, behind her nurse.

But defeat makes all officers of talent better generals. In A.D. 1644 "Fiery Tom" won the battle of Nantwich; took Lathom House, which had been gallantly defended by the Countess of Derby, won a victory at Selby, and besieged York. Here, however, Prince Rupert interrupted his career, and the siege was raised. But soon followed the greatest battle of the war, that of Marston Moor. It began in the evening—

"The summer evening, long as winter's day."

The two armies faced each other in silence. The hush was broken by Fairfax's men singing psalms as they advanced steadily through the cornfields to the attack. Cromwell was there, and old Skippon, and on the other side Prince Rupert. At first there was varying success, but by the time the moon was high the contest was won, and victory was with the Parliament. Four thousand one hundred and fifty bodies lay

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dead in the moonlight. Fairfax rode about calling to the soldiers to spare the ignorant peasants. "Colours enough were won to have made surplices for all the cathedrals of England, had they been white."

In December, A.D. 1644, the Parliament appointed Fairfax commander-in-chief, and at his special request allowed Oliver Cromwell to remain with him. His army swept on with the sure advance of an incoming tide. On the 14th of June, A.D. 1645, he was opposed by Charles in person at Naseby, in Northamptonshire. The king had an army of 11,000 men. He rode beside them in complete armour, sword in hand. "Are you ready to fight for me?" he asked the men. "All! all!" they shouted in reply; and well they fought, but victory was not theirs. The king was forced to fly, and never drew rein till he reached Ashby-de-la-Zouche, twenty-eight miles away.

On this day Charles lost not only the battle, he lost also the small remainder of trust that his people had in him. For his letters fell into the hands of the enemy, and they revealed that he was plotting to bring Irish Papists over to fight the English. The horror this caused was not surprising, considering a dreadful event that had happened on the 23rd of October, A.D. 1641. The Irish army which Strafford had trained, destining them to win victory for the king, suddenly fell upon the unsuspecting Protestants in Ireland, and murdered from 40,000 to 200,000 of them, men, women, and children.

Charles now wandered about from place to place like a hunted deer, but still he would not give in, and Fairfax still advanced, till he had swept on even to Truro and the Land's End. Then, wheeling back, he advanced against Oxford, "the capital of the Cavaliers," and took the town.

But still Charles would not give in. He drew fresh hopes from the division which had arisen between the Scotch Presbyterians and the English Independents. The Parliament, too, had become divided against itself, and Charles long hoped, by playing one party against another, to obtain his crown once more.

Again and again attempts were made to treat with him, but "he could not be straightforward for a single day, nor even in a single sheet

of paper." He told his wife that he purposely made promises in words capable of two meanings.[1]

At last, fairly driven to bay, he gave himself up to the Scots, and by them was handed over to the Parliament. After some weeks' confinement in Hampton Court, Hurst Castle in Hampshire, and at Carisbrooke Castle in the Isle of Wight, he was brought before a court of justice, selected by the House of Commons, for trial. Many changes had happened since the last fatal day that he entered Westminster Hall. Hampden had died from wounds in battle. Pym, dying in old age, had been buried with honour at Westminster Abbey. Of the other three of the five members impeached by Charles, not one was now in the House.

Charles refused to acknowledge the legality of the court by defending himself before it. He asked to be tried before Lords and Commons combined. There was no precedent for the trial of a monarch; deposition or murder were the old ways of getting rid of unpopular kings.

Bradshaw conducted the trial with coarse severity. On the seventh day, as Charles was brought in, a soldier, touched with pity, chanced to say, "God bless you!" Charles thanked him, but an officer struck him with a cane. "Methinks," said Charles, "the punishment exceedeth the offence." Bradshaw now upbraided him with his refusal to plead against the charges brought against him by the people. "No, *not by half* the people!" cried a female voice, supposed to be that of Lady Fairfax. The trial went on. A citizen kept repeating to those near him, "Have we hearts of stone? Are we men?" and then, rising, he said in a trembling voice, "My lord, I am not satisfied to consent to this sentence." One is thankful for this trembling protest. But Bradshaw continued his bitter speech, and then told the clerk to say what punishment was due to "a traitor, a tyrant, a murderer, and public enemy to the people of England." "Ha, murderer!" Charles is said to have exclaimed, with a startled voice, on hearing that awful word applied to him. He had never forgiven himself for the execution of Strafford, and doubtless this word awakened a fresh pang of self-

[1] See *Letters of Charles I. to Henrietta Maria.*

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reproach in his heart. The clerk rose and read the sentence of death, that "Charles Stuart should be put to death by severing his head from his body."

His children were brought to bid him farewell. He took the Princess Elizabeth in his arms, and prayed for a blessing on her and the others, and gave her two seals set with diamonds, "and there was a great weeping."

On the night of the 29th of January 1649 he slept soundly more than four hours. Awaking early in the morning, he rose and dressed himself, putting on two shirts, lest the cold weather should make him tremble. "Death," said he, "is not terrible to me, and bless my God I am prepared." Bishop Juxon remained an hour with him in prayer. When summoned, he walked erect and rapidly across the Park to Whitehall. The spectators, men, women, soldiers, were all silent as the grave, save when some prayer or blessing escaped a sympathising lip. He entered Whitehall, passed through the long gallery, stepped out into the open air, on the raised scaffold, and for one moment lifted eyes and hands to heaven in prayer. He then spoke to the people, saying he died for their liberties, knelt to pray, laid his head on the low block, and in a moment all was over.

The head and body were carried to Windsor, and there privately buried.

No one can read the account of the close of his life without compassion. But his career is a sad example of conscientious devotion to bad objects. He laboured to promote royal tyranny in the State, and priestly tyranny in the Church. We may admire his firmness in refusing to plant Presbyterianism in England, but we cannot forget that to him and Laud must be laid the guilt of causing the Church to be identified in the eyes of the people with oppression and injustice. By a strange partial paralysis of conscience, he never reproached himself for his many untruths; while, on the other hand, he blamed himself for the least concession made to the demands of his people.

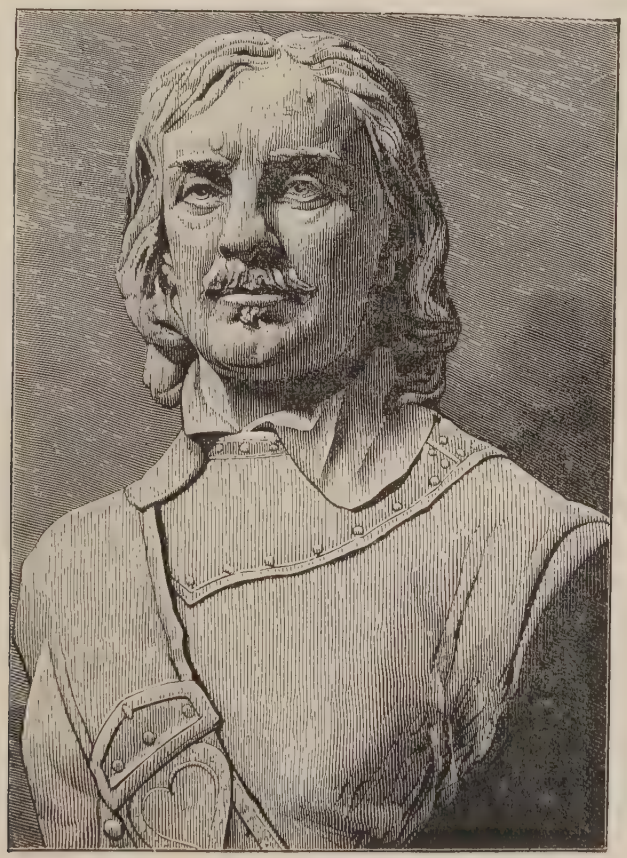
CHAPTER XXXVI.

OLIVER CROMWELL, A.D. 1649–1658.

From the days of Egbert in the ninth century A.D., to Queen Victoria in our own days, England has always been ruled by persons of royal birth and bearing royal title, except for a few short years in which one man, a simple country gentleman by birth, governed the land. That country gentleman was Oliver Cromwell. He belonged to a junior branch of a family which had already given one great statesman to our country, Thomas Cromwell, Minister of Henry VIII., and beheaded by that ungrateful monarch. Oliver was born at Huntingdon on the 23rd of April 1599. On the 23rd of the same month, in A.D. 1610, he entered Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge. Thence he went to London to study law. But he soon forsook law for love, and married in August, A.D. 1620, when only twenty-one years old.[1] Upon the death of his father, he returned to Huntingdonshire. Here he might in ordinary times have lived and died unknown, except as a good son to his widowed mother, as a most affectionate husband and father, and as a shrewd magistrate and member of Parliament. But extraordinary times bring to light extraordinary abilities, and such were his. As M.P. first for Huntingdon, and afterwards for Cambridge, he early became interested in the political questions of the day. He voted with his famous cousin, John Hampden, against ship-money, and shared his horror of Laud's Popish tendencies. A lion erect was the crest of the family, and a suitable one in his case, for he was utterly fearless,

[1] Curiously enough, his wife's name was Stewart, and there seems to have been a well-founded belief that she was distantly connected with the royal family of England. But to this Cromwell never cared to allude.

and when roused to anger could be excessively fierce. His first speech was made in a very angry mood against the enclosure of some common lands, against the will of the tenants. Though not wealthy, he was free with his purse, and gave £300 towards putting down the rebellion in Ireland. When war was declared between Charles and the Parliament, he at once distinguished himself by



OLIVER CROMWELL.

forming a military association for the eastern counties in which he dwelt, and they were thus kept free from Royalist invasion throughout the war. Oliver soon saw that the Parliamentary army was badly disciplined. "We must have *men of religion*," he said, "to cope with Charles's *men of honour*" (meaning men of rank). "A good

notion," replied Hampden, "if it could be executed." Oliver carried out his idea, and formed his famous band of "Ironsides." "They are a lovely company!" he wrote. "They are honest, sober, and expect to be used as *men*." "They were never defeated!" he proudly added in later days. In fact, doubtless to his own surprise, he became a great general. The brilliant campaigns of Fairfax were aided by him, and when at last Fairfax retired, broken in health and troubled in mind, the army of Oliver Cromwell went on from victory to victory.

From the battlefield Oliver came to London, and took part in the trial of Charles I. For a short time he had tried to make terms with him, but, becoming convinced of his utter untrustworthiness, he gave up the attempt, and voted for his death. He thought him a traitor to his country, and saw no reason why royalty should save him from a traitor's doom.

After this interlude, he was again sent forth on a military expedition. This time it was to put down the Irish rebellion. He went, believing himself called upon to avenge the massacre of the Protestants a few years before. His campaigns were short and sharp. Whenever his terms were refused, he took summary vengeance. Drogheda was besieged, stormed, and set on fire. It was a fearful scene. "I forbade my men," wrote he, "to spare any that were in arms. I think that night they slew about 3000 men." Wexford was similarly taken. But Oliver held his men in stern discipline off the field, and challenged his adversaries to give an instance of any *one* man massacred or banished *not in arms*, except after due course of justice.

After the death of Charles I., the Scots faced about *against* the English Parliament. They crowned his son, after forcing him to sign their Covenant. They had no more idea of religious freedom than had Laud himself. All men were to be Presbyterians under Charles II. as a Presbyterian king. But to this Oliver would not agree. In his "lovely company" of faithful soldiers were many Independents who would not sign the Presbyterian Covenant. Slowly the idea took root and grew in his mind, that all men should enjoy liberty of conscience in religion, so long as they remained loyal to the government

of the land. This became to him a fixed principle. He would not allow Presbyterians any more than Papists to tyrannise over their neighbours.

He was now sent to fight *against* the Scots, his former allies. Successful at first, he was very nigh perishing at Dunbar. The foe, under General Leslie, occupied almost unassailable ground on the heights above the town, and Cromwell's men were sick and starving. But the Scots, neglecting the advantages of their position, advanced to attack him. "They move!" cried he delightedly, and rapidly flung his force upon them. "They run!" he cried again, as they were soon dispersed in confusion, and as the sun shone through the morning mist, he added, "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered! Like as the mist vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away." His victory was complete. Following Charles II. to England, he won a final victory over him at Worcester. This crowning mercy, as he called it, closed the second Civil War.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PROTECTORATE.

Now began the second and most difficult part of Oliver Cromwell's career. What was the state of things when he entered London as a victorious general? He found the remains of the old Long Parliament still sitting. He found a strong Presbyterian party, unwilling to allow liberty to any one but themselves. He found the Parliamentary leaders more jealous of him than grateful to him. In fact, everything was at sixes and sevens. The results which always follow a revolution had taken place. The old English Constitution of centuries had been broken down. People were at their wits' end how to replace it. The members of Parliament felt that there ought to be *some* part of a Government which should be permanent, and that it should not all be taken to pieces every three years. So they proposed that *one-third* of the members of Parliament should not go out at the dissolution. "No! no!" cried Cromwell, "England must have an altogether new Parliament."

But Cromwell too thought that some permanent element must be provided. This, he thought, should be a person. "A Parliament and a Person," this was his plan for the nation. But who was to be the person? Oliver thought the nation should not hesitate to say—*himself!* He had subdued the Welsh, the Irish, the Scots, and the Royalist party in England. Did not these successes mark him out as the one man manifestly fitted in the providence of God to be ruler of the land? Cromwell thought so, and on this belief he acted.

On the 20th of April, A.D. 1653, Oliver Cromwell, clad in plain clothes and worsted stockings, entered the House of Commons. "This is the time! I must do it!" he muttered to Harrison. He stood up, and with rising vehemence upbraided the members, first in general terms, and then individually, with their unfitness for their position. Seizing the Speaker's mace, he shouted, "What shall we do with

this bauble? Take it away!" Turning to Sir Harry Vane, he cried, "Oh, Sir Harry Vane, thou art other than a good one. The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!"

The astonished and disconcerted members were hastily sent about their business. The doors were locked, and Cromwell went home virtually ruler of the land.

As usual after revolutions, the power had thus passed into the hands of the army.

But Oliver did not mean to be a tyrant. He tried to rule constitutionally as far as he could. "It was his wish," as he said, "not to keep the power in military hands, no, not for a day." His first experiment was to gather together 156 men chosen for their high character, but he soon found that goodness and piety alone are not enough to make statesmen. That assembly, to which the names of Barebones'[1] or the Little Parliament were given, was a failure.

He next sent out a summons for a general election, the first which had taken place for fourteen years. It was a memorable one, for in it members of the "three nations," as they were still called, English, Scotch, and Irish, sat for the first time side by side. It met on the 3rd of September, A.D. 1653; Cromwell's "lucky day," the anniversary of Dunbar and Worcester.

Oliver hoped great things from this Parliament. "You are met," he said, "on the greatest occasion that I believe England ever saw." "Healing and settling" was the work he charged them to accomplish. To his infinite disappointment, they spent their time in debating whether or not they would acknowledge the man who had summoned them!

Greatly annoyed, Oliver dissolved them, and for a short time ruled the country by ten major-generals. But, as soon as order was fairly established, he determined to summon another Parliament. This met on the 17th of September, A.D. 1656. All now went well. They offered him the title of king, but this he declined. Peace was secured at home, and power abroad. His foreign policy was brilliantly successful. The name of England, which had fallen so low, was honoured from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. The

[1] From the name of one of the members.

Spanish Fleet was destroyed by Blake. The Dutch were vanquished. Oliver became the champion of Protestantism ; and when the Duke of Savoy persecuted his Protestant subjects, he not only interfered on their behalf, but compelled Louis XIV., the magnificent sovereign of France, to join in his efforts on their behalf. The Queen of Sweden prized his friendship, and thought him like her grandfather, the great Gustavus.

But the Protector, as he was styled, had never been of strong constitution. He was taken ill in August, A.D. 1658. On Monday, the 30th, "there roared and howled all day and night a mighty storm of wind." Oliver was dying. He was overheard praying. It was for England! "Give them," he murmured, "one heart and mutual love, and go on to deliver them and make the name of Christ glorious in the world."

On the afternoon of Friday, the 3rd of September, the anniversary of his two greatest victories, Oliver closed the battle of life and entered into his rest.

Some have called him a hypocrite! Whatever were his faults, this he was not. What a man is at all times, in all companies, in public and in private, living and dying, that is his true character, and so judged he was a deeply religious man. If mistaken in some of his religious impressions, he was always most vehemently sincere. His career was an exceptional one. He seized upon government as a brave man may place himself at the helm in a storm. He may have no right there, but the crew will not quarrel with him, if he steers the vessel well and skilfully amidst howling winds and raging billows![1]

[1] The following extract from a review in the *Times*, November 19, 1891, of the last volume of Gardiner's *History of England*, is interesting :—"In the present volume Mr. S. R. Gardiner has an inspiriting task in the analysis and contrast of the characters of Cromwell and Charles I. It is needless to say that he does it with judicial impartiality. 'It was with no little surprise,' he writes, 'that I found charge after charge against Cromwell melting away. . . . Thus tested, he is no divinely-inspired hero, or faultless monster, but a brave, honourable man, striving according to his lights to lead his countrymen into the paths of peace and godliness.' Of Charles I. his judgment is equally temperate, and equally sustained by patient and laborious search. While doing full justice to the dignity of Charles's bearing at the end, and acknowledging that his execution was a revolutionary act, essentially illegal and unconstitutional, he nevertheless insists on those elements of his character which rendered him an insuperable obstacle to the orderly and peaceable course of constitutional change. 'As long,' says Gardiner, 'as he remained a factor in English politics, government by compromise was impossible. His own conception of government was that of a wise prince constantly interfering to check the madness of his people. Even on the scaffold he reminded his subjects that a share in the government was nothing pertaining to the people.'"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CHARLES II., A.D. 1660–1685.

OLIVER CROMWELL, as he lay dying, was supposed to have named his eldest son Richard as his successor. Richard might have passed muster as one in a long line of kings, but he was quite unfit to hold so difficult a post as that of Protector. "Dick is an idle fellow," his father used to say. There was nothing about him to command the affections of the nation, and they now returned in a full torrent towards the heir of their old monarchs.

On the 26th of May, A.D. 1660, Charles II. landed at Dover, and on the 29th, his birthday, he entered London. He passed along "with a triumph of above 20,000 horse and foot, shouting with inexpressible joy, the ways strewed with flowers, bells ringing, streets hung with tapestry, fountains running with wine; the Mayor and all the Companies in their liveries, chains of gold, and banners; lords and nobles clad in cloth of silver, gold, and velvet; the windows and balconies well set with ladies; trumpets and music; and myriads of people flocking, so as they were seven hours in passing the city, even from two in the afternoon till nine at night. I stood in the Strand and beheld it, and blessed God," wrote John Evelyn, a faithful Royalist.

Alas! the reign that followed proved Charles very unworthy of the loyalty thus joyously manifested. Seventeen years of exile had taught him nothing. From his father he inherited nothing but his faults. The years of his rule are so many steps downwards into the valley of humiliation; and the England which he found so high in glory, he left disgraced amongst the nations.

One of the first measures taken was at once to dissolve the union of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Another was to take a mean

revenge on the dead. The mouldering remains of Cromwell, of his wife, mother, and daughter, of the great patriot Pym, and the victorious Admiral Blake, were taken from their tombs in Westminster Abbey, and thrown into pits with every indignity. The living were next to suffer vengeance. Charles had promised forgiveness of the past ere he returned to England, reserving, however, the right to Parliament to make some exceptions. The list of these exceptions proved a long one. More than a score were put to death. "Where is your good old cause now?" one named Harrison was asked, as he was led to execution. "Here it is," he said, clapping his hand on his breast, "and I am going to seal it with my blood." Sir Harry Vane was another sufferer. Others were thrown into prison, and one was even followed abroad and murdered on a Sunday, as he entered a church in Switzerland.

Charles's first Prime Minister was Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, historian of the Civil War. He returned from exile ignorant of the state of the public mind, and tried to put the clock back to the times before the Commonwealth. But Parliament, loyal as it was to the king, resisted every attempt to make him absolute. In matters of religion, Clarendon determined to enforce the strictest conformity to the Church of England. By the Corporation Act, passed in A.D. 1661, no one might act as magistrate who did not receive the sacrament according to the ceremonial of that Church. In A.D. 1662 the famous Act of Uniformity was passed. All ministers who did not sign a declaration of complete assent to every Article in the Book of Common Prayer were commanded to give up their livings on the 24th of August, called thereafter "Black St. Bartholomew's Day." About 2000 ministers were thus lost to our Church, mostly pious men, and some of them also learned. Unlike the conduct of Cromwell, who granted pensions for life to the Royalist clergy whom he excluded, no provisions were allowed for these Nonconformists. Houseless and penniless they were cast on the world. It was natural that measures should be taken to purge the Church from persons holding opinions not in accordance with it, but there can be no excuse for the cruelty which would not allow those ejected to worship God according to their

own consciences. In A.D. 1664 the Conventicle Act was passed. This made it penal for any one above sixteen to attend any meeting for religious worship except at church. A first act of disobedience was to be punished by three months' imprisonment, a second by six, and a third by seven years. As if this was not enough, the Five Miles Act was passed in A.D. 1665, which forbade every nonconforming minister to approach within five miles of any town in which he had formerly lived. No less than 8000 Protestants are said to have been imprisoned in this reign, in addition to a large number of Roman Catholics. Of 1500 Quakers, 350 died in prison. "I saw," wrote Samuel Pepys, "several poor creatures carried by constables for being at conventicles. They go like lambs, without any resistance. I would to God they would either reform, or be more wise and not be catched." Baxter, author of the *Saints' Rest*, was amongst the prisoners under these Acts, and John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, spent twelve years in jail.

In Scotland, as in the days of Charles I. and Laud, a determined attempt was made to establish Episcopacy. The Earl of Lauderdale gained a hateful celebrity by his merciless cruelty to those who held fast to the old "Covenant." Thumbscrews, and the Boot, an instrument which crushed a man's leg to pulp, were freely used; but no mortal agony could quell the stedfast hearts of Scotsmen, determined not to act against their conscientious convictions.

The foreign policy of Charles II. was exactly the contrary to that of the Protector. He sold Dunkirk, which had been gallantly won from the Spaniards, to Louis XIV. for about £250,000. He was frequently at war with the Dutch. His fleet won a great victory over them in A.D. 1666, and destroyed many of their ships and unprotected towns. De Witte, their commander, vowed vengeance, and in the following spring his fleet appeared in the Medway, and sailed up to Chatham, "doing us not only disgrace but incredible mischief, burning many of our best warships." "Everybody now-a-days," wrote Pepys, "reflects upon Oliver Cromwell, and commends him—what brave things he did, and made all men fear him."

Clarendon was made the scapegoat for these disasters, and the chief power passed into the hands of five unprincipled men, the initials

of whose surnames spelt the suitable term *Cabal*—Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. The first two of these signed, along with Charles, the most infamous secret treaty ever made by any English monarch. It was with Louis XIV Charles promised to proclaim himself a Roman Catholic, and to establish Roman Catholicism in England; and in return for this Louis undertook to pay him a yearly pension of about £150,000. Thenceforth he was a mere vassal of Louis, and lived in dread of the country finding out his baseness. Unhappily, in those evil days, French gold found its way to other hands besides his, and was freely spent in bribing statesmen.

Charles brought still deeper disgrace upon England by his shameless immorality. He had married a Portuguese princess, Catherine of Braganza, a pretty and amiable lady, who had been brought up in a convent. She brought him a dowry of £50,000, with the cities of Bombay in India and Tangier in Morocco. He forced her to receive amongst her ladies the beautiful, bad women with whom he wasted his days, and on whom he conferred titles of nobility. When she begged, with tears, to be allowed to return to her native country, his only answer was to send away almost all her Portuguese attendants, and to insist still more cruelly on submission to his wishes. His only children were six illegitimate sons, of whom the Duke of Monmouth was the eldest. To revenge a slighting remark made upon Charles's conduct by Sir Charles Overton, Monmouth waylaid him with a dozen soldiers, as he returned from the House of Commons, assaulted him, and caused his nose to be split with a penknife.

As time went on, the nation began to suspect Charles's designs and change of religion. The persecuting zeal which had fallen on the Nonconformists consequently fell next on the Papists, and many of them were put to death upon the false accusations of treason made by a wretch named Sir Titus Oates. But plots now began to be made in earnest by men who dreaded a lapse of the country into Popery; and Lord William Russell and Algernon Sydney, two noble men, were put to death, although there was nothing actually criminal in their designs.

It is a relief to turn from such things to the only circumstance which sheds one ray of pure glory on this miserable reign. This was

the splendid outburst of science, which led to the foundation of the Royal Society. The name of Sir Isaac Newton, the great astronomer, would alone have made the period memorable, but other scientific men surrounded him, only second to him in their celebrity.

Two terrible calamities befell London in A.D. 1665 and 1666. In the spring of 1665 the plague began to spread through London. One hundred thousand people are supposed to have died of it. A terrible gloom reigned in the streets. Red crosses marked the houses where any lay ill, and no one was allowed to enter them. At night, carts went about, men calling out "Bring out your dead! bring out your

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

dead!" The corpses were hastily huddled into deep pits, without one word of prayer. The disease was often fearfully rapid in its effect, men and women falling dead in the streets, while many often went raving mad. It continued to rage more and more all through the summer, only dying away as winter approached.

On the 3rd of September, A.D. 1666, the Great Fire of London broke out, and burned three days. The nights were lighter than the days. Thirteen thousand houses and eighty-nine churches were burnt. St. Paul's Cathedral was destroyed. "I was infinitely concerned,"

wrote Evelyn, "to find that goodly church a sad ruin, flakes of vast stone split asunder, and nothing remaining entire but the inscription in the architrave, showing by whom it was built, which had not one letter defaced. The people who walked about the ruins appeared like men in a great desert." Two hundred thousand people had to lie in the fields under the open sky. The Papists were unjustly accused of causing this fire, silly stories being told of their having prophesied some disaster, with the warning—

"And if you will avoid that happ,
Return into your mother's lapp."[1]

One Sunday evening, late in January, A.D. 1665, John Evelyn tells us he was at Whitehall, and "never," says he, "can I forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God; the king sitting and toying with the Duchesses of Portsmouth and Cleveland, a French boy singing love-songs in that glorious gallery, while about twenty great courtiers were at basset, round a large table, with a bank of £2000 in gold before them. Six days after, all was in the dust!" On Monday, the 2nd of February, Charles was seized with an apoplectic fit. He lingered a few days. Bishop Ken, author of the Evening Hymn, attended his deathbed, but he refused to receive the sacrament from him. His brother James, Duke of York, asked him if he would have a Romish priest. He signed his assent. A monk, named Huddleston, was brought up the back-stairs, and gave him absolution and the sacrament. The queen, who was herself unwell, sent to ask his forgiveness. Charles said, "Alas! poor woman, *she* beg *my* pardon! I beg hers, with all my heart."

"Don't let poor Nelly starve," he said later, referring to one of his mistresses. And so he died. Never had man more glorious opportunities. Never man more disgracefully threw them away. With good abilities, fine health and strength, borne to the throne by a full tide of loyalty, he allowed himself to be mastered by the lowest passions. Sensuality, cruelty, and deceit marked his career. The companions of his base pleasures called him the "Merry Monarch." History must rather remember him as Charles, the Shameless King.

[1] Meaning, to the Roman Church.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

JAMES II., A.D. 1685–1688—A LAST ATTEMPT AT ABSOLUTE RULE.

"NEVER fear!" said Charles II. once to James, his brother, when he warned him against attempts to assassinate him; "no one will ever kill me to make way for you to the throne."

This was true. Charles's tact and indolent good-nature won him a certain amount of popularity. People forgot his vices as they listened to his witty jests, or shared his courteous smiles.

But James was not of a nature ever to become popular. For good and for evil his character was cast in a stronger mould than that of his brother. More honest than he, James had avowed his conversion to the Roman Catholic religion, when that step was very likely to make him lose all chance of inheriting the English crown. In fact, only the brilliant eloquence of one man—Lord Halifax—prevented him from being cut off from the succession. The people were deeply annoyed with him. "This night," says Evelyn,—the 5th of November 1673,—"the youths of the city burnt the Pope in effigy, after they had made a procession with it in great triumph, they being displeased with the duke for altering his religion." "The duke appeared no more in chapel, to the infinite grief and ruin of the nation."

On being made king, however, James's first act was to proclaim that he would defend the English Church, and respect the rights of the people. So charmed were the Council with his gracious words, that they caused his speech to be printed, and the next day it was dispersed throughout the kingdom.

But "all is not gold that glitters." Very early James gave signs of being a thorough Stuart, determined to have his own way in every-

thing. "If you wish to meet me often," he told the Commons, "you must use me well." They did use him well in one respect, for they at once settled a liberal income upon him for life; but they were not so ready to please him in another object upon which his heart was set. By the "Test Act," passed in the reign of Charles, no one could hold any public appointment who would not communicate in the Church of England. James very naturally wished this Act to be repealed, that those who shared his faith might be placed on an equal footing with his Protestant subjects. But the remembrance of Popish plots was still too fresh in the mind of the people to allow of their granting the king's desire. Moreover, many suspected, even so early as this, that not *equality* but *supremacy* of Roman Catholicism was the secret wish of their monarch. Very soon, therefore, an alarming though foolish conspiracy was made to set Monmouth, eldest illegitimate son of Charles, on the throne. This handsome but weak and frivolous youth was singularly unfit to be the leader of a party, sternly set on upholding Protestantism and national liberty. His chief supporter was the Duke of Argyle, who not many years before had been sentenced to death in Scotland on a charge so slight that Halifax said, "We should not hang a dog in England on the grounds on which my Lord Argyle was sentenced." Argyle landed in Scotland, but even his own clan did not rally round him. He was taken prisoner, led in chains through the streets of Edinburgh, and put to death. Monmouth himself landed at Lyme in Dorsetshire. The peasantry of that county, of Somerset and Devonshire, flocked around him. He made a triumphal entry into the little town of Taunton, the citizens decking the houses with cloth of their own manufacture, and the maidens presenting him with a banner worked by their own hands. This little gleam of glory was all "King Monmouth" was to enjoy. A few days later he suffered a crushing defeat at the battle of Sedgemoor, near Bridgewater, *the last battle fought on English ground.* Ere the fighting was over, he galloped away, and was taken prisoner a few days later, hiding in a field of beans. He was brought before James, and, throwing himself at his feet, implored for pardon; but this his royal uncle sternly refused. He was executed two days afterwards.

Then followed James's revenge on the poor deluded peasantry, who, with their scythes and pitchforks, had dared to fight his trained bands. The savage Captain Kirke was sent to quarter his brutal soldiers (called Kirke's Lambs) upon the people; but, as he was suspected of letting off too many persons for money, Judge Jeffreys was despatched to complete the chastisement. This horrible man appeared to the unhappy country folk like a devil in human shape. He raved, and stormed, and bullied, and seemed to delight in sentencing men and women to death and torture. About three hundred people were hung in those well-named "Bloody Assizes," and eight hundred transported; while a fine of £2000 was demanded from the young women who had worked Monmouth's banner. Amongst the sufferers was the noble Lady Alice Lisle, whose only crime was giving food and shelter to two fugitive rebels. Jeffreys with great satisfaction sentenced her to be burnt, and it was only by extreme effort the sentence was altered to beheading, a death which she endured with meek and noble courage.

Then Jeffreys returned to London, where James received him most graciously, and ever afterwards showed that he was the man whom above all others he delighted to honour!

CHAPTER XL.

JAMES II., A.D. 1685–1688—DOING SOMETHING FOR HIS RELIGION.

SHORTLY after the accession of James II., Louis XIV. sent him 500,000 crowns! This gift James received with tears of delight. From time to time afterwards he received similar subsidies, and of course he was expected in return to shape his policy according to the wishes of his paymaster. Now and then he turned a little restive against Louis, but a diminution of his allowances soon brought him into submission. He could not, therefore, take any noble part in the politics of Europe. He set himself, instead, as he said, "to do something for his religion."

A man who devotes his life to "do something for his religion" is often worthy of high honour; but when what he does is both foolish and wrong, he only deserves shame. This was the case as to James. Religion with him simply meant belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. His "religion" did not prevent his being a bad man, for he was almost as immoral as Charles himself, and in temper he was harsh and cruel. "This marble is not harder than the king," was said by one who knew him well. As a sovereign, his religious zeal made him a traitor to his country, for he had sworn to defend the English Church and Constitution, and he persistently attempted to ruin both.

He first tried to do away with the Habeas Corpus Act. In this he failed. Then, more excusably, he tried to have the Test Act abolished. In this, too, he did not succeed. Finding he could not bend the existing Parliament to his will, he tried to get one together which would be more docile. In this, too, he failed. For the lords-

lieutenant of counties, whom he charged to endeavour to procure the election of members pledged to support his schemes, almost all refused to do so, and were consequently dismissed by him. He next tried to accomplish his purposes *without* the sanction of Parliament. He claimed a dispensing power, that is, a power to prevent laws being enforced when so it pleased him. "I am determined," said he, "to have twelve judges of my mind on this matter." "Your Majesty," answered one of the Chief Justices of Common Pleas, "may find twelve judges of your mind, but hardly twelve lawyers." "This," said another, "is to annul the whole statute law. I dare not do it." Whereupon James dismissed four of the Chief Justices, and determined to have his own way even *without* the acknowledgment of a dispensing power.

In Scotland, James urged the Parliament to accept from him an Act of Indulgence granting large political rights to the Roman Catholics, while the Covenanters were still to be objects of persecution. The English awaited anxiously the decision of the Scottish Lords. With petty spitefulness, James therefore detained all letters from over the border for a whole week! Scotland would not submit to his dictation.

Still untaught by experience, James had no idea of consulting the wishes of his people. "I will make no concessions," said he; "my father made concessions, and it cost him his head." It would have been truer to say that Charles I. lost his head because he made concessions too late and too unwillingly.

The Pope himself disapproved of the daring measures which James now took, but James did not heed his disapprobation. He rejoiced that he could "take bold strokes." He said that as Henry VIII., by proclaiming himself Head of the Church, had parted it from Rome, so he, by God's providence now Head of the Church, would reunite it with Rome.

He introduced numbers of Roman Catholic officers into the army. He gave the highest civil appointments to Roman Catholics. He dismissed his brothers-in-law, Rochester from being Lord Treasurer, and Clarendon from being Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, because they

would not give up their Protestant faith. He established a new court for ecclesiastical affairs, and set his favourite Jeffreys at its head. He put Roman Catholics into English livings. He commanded Magdalen College to receive a pervert to Roman Catholicism as President. When the Fellows refused to acknowledge him, James rated them soundly. "Go home; get you gone! I am king! I will be obeyed!" The Fellows still refusing to yield to him, he deprived them of their fellowships.

To all remonstrances he would answer, "I will go on. I have been too indulgent; indulgences ruined my father."

In Ireland, James appointed Tyrconnel, a violent, fanatical Papist, ruler. Under him the Protestants were so ill-treated that numbers fled from the country. It was hardly a secret that James wished all Protestants to be got rid of from Ireland, and to keep the island as a happy corner for Papists, placing it under the protection of the French monarch.

James showered honours on the Papal Nuncio. A young peer, Lord Somerset, declined to attend this dignitary in a procession. "Sire," said he, "I cannot, without breaking the law." "I will make you fear me as well as the law," retorted James. "Do you not know that I am above the law?" "Your Majesty may be above the law," replied Somerset, "but I am not, and while I obey the law I fear nothing."

James commanded the bishops to order a declaration of Indulgence or toleration to dissenters, including Roman Catholics, composed by himself, to be read in all the churches. They refused. They were learning, indeed, something of the need of toleration, but it was simply illegal for James to grant any rights without the sanction of Parliament. Seven nobly disobedient bishops were sent to the Tower. "I did not expect this from you," said James. "This is a standard of rebellion." As they were carried down the river, shouts arose, "God bless your lordships!" On the 29th of June 1688 they were tried. The jury sat all through the succeeding night. At 10 A.M. next day their verdict was announced. It was, Not Guilty! Halifax sprang up and waved his hat. "Benches and

galleries raised a shout. The outside crowd caught up the cheer, and in a moment an innumerable throng sent up a huzza which was heard to Temple Bar."

The drama was drawing to an end. The king had insulted nobles, lawyers, universities, the army and the Church. With one consent they cast him off. They invited the Prince and Princess of Orange, his son-in-law and daughter, to come over from the Netherlands and fill the throne he had dishonoured. They came, and James fled, forsaken even by those who had formerly renounced their religion to please him. His daughter Anne joined her sister, and her husband, the Prince of Denmark, after dining with James one day, forsook him the next. The unhappy fugitive was stopped by sailors, who pulled him about, and stole his watch and money. But all were glad to be rid of him, and he was allowed to escape to France, where he received a generous welcome from his old ally Louis.

On the 13th of February 1689, William and Mary were proclaimed King and Queen of England.

CHAPTER XLI.

WILLIAM III. AND MARY, A.D. 1689–1702—A SOLDIER KING.

JAMES was not disposed to give up his kingdom without a struggle. He landed in Ireland on the 12th of March 1689, with 2500 French soldiers, and in May held a Parliament in Dublin, when he appeared in royal robes and wearing his crown. Thence he marched to Londonderry, and summoned that city to surrender; but, on its refusal to do so, he quickly slunk back to the capital. Londonderry had indeed no idea of surrendering! Under its brave governors, Major Baker and the Rev. George Walker, it stood a siege of 105 days—"the most memorable in the annals of the British Isles." Its garrison was reduced from 7000 to 3000, and its inhabitants were wasted to skeletons, before relief was brought to it by gallant Micaiah Browning, who himself "died the most enviable of deaths, in sight of his home, which he had saved from destruction."

Ireland was in a miserable condition. The Roman Catholics were bent on destroying the Protestants, and these defended themselves with a desperate courage. The country was wasted and desolate. William himself put an end to the war by winning the great victory of the Boyne. He showed himself as brave as James was timid, and the Irish were reported to say that if they could change kings with the English, they were ready to fight the campaign over again.

Yet once again James had hopes of recovering his throne. In A.D. 1692 a French army lay quartered in Normandy, ready for a descent on our shores in his behalf; but the English navy under Russell forced the French ships to fly, and vessel after vessel was burned under the eyes of their own army at La Hogue.

But the defeat of James's designs did not relieve England from war.

James had been the pensioner of Louis XIV.; William, on the contrary, was his chief opponent, and under him England found itself pledged to war to the utmost against the Great Monarch.

Three times over in history it has seemed as if almost all Europe, exclusive of Russia, would be gathered into vassalage under one great head. Charlemagne ruled in the ninth century from the Atlantic to the Danube. Napoleon I., in the days of our grandfathers, was proclaimed Emperor, and dictated his will to the kings whom he had set up, and who owned him as their superior. So in the seventeenth century Louis XIV. aimed at universal sway. This remarkable man was born A.D. 1638. His father, Louis XIII., died when he was only five years old, and his mother when he was only ten. His childhood was passed amid tumultuous scenes, and in a popular outbreak he and his mother had been forced to fly, and were once in actual want. He remembered this in after days, and resolved never to let power pass into the hands of the people. At eighteen he took the reins of government into his own hands. "I will govern," said he. "I am the State." "He who reigns must labour," was his motto, and for fifty-four years he gave eight hours a day to business. His great Home Minister, Colbert, assisted him, and under their administration France rose by leaps and bounds to a state of wonderful prosperity. But two mistakes of Louis, like worms in a bud, destroyed all this happiness.

He sought glory abroad by invading the dominions of his neighbours.

He endeavoured at home to crush and extinguish Protestantism. He revoked the Edict of Nantes, which granted toleration to Protestants, and sent his dragoons to force them to conform to the Romish Church, of which he considered himself the heaven-appointed champion.

William III. of England was the man destined to break down the proud predominance of this haughty king.

William was born at the Hague[1] on the 4th of November 1650. Like Louis, he had a troubled childhood, and was early left an orphan,

[1] A rural palace, built in the twelfth century, a few miles from Rotterdam.

his father having died a few days before his birth, and his mother, Mary, a daughter of Charles I., being carried off by smallpox when he was ten years old. Like Louis, he plunged at eighteen into public life. He saw in this French autocrat his personal enemy, for Louis had seized his property, the province of Orange;[1] the enemy of his country, which he had invaded; and the enemy of his faith, for William was a

COSTUMES OF THE TIME OF WILLIAM AND MARY.

decided Protestant. During many years he combated Louis at the greatest disadvantage. He was determined "to die in the last ditch" rather than surrender to Louis. When he became King of England, the sides were more evenly balanced, and by patience and skilful alliances he gained ground inch by inch, till at last the old French

[1] Orange is a province in the south of France, which had come to William's ancestors by marriage.

potentate was forced, at the Treaty of Ryswick, to give up almost all that he had gained by years of war.

But England was slow to realise the greatness of William's abilities, and to see that in opposing Louis he was defending, not merely Holland, but England also and the Protestant faith. It was only when Louis exasperated the nation, by acknowledging the son of James II. as heir to the crown, that the English people entered with any spirit into William's military endeavours. The position of our foreigner-king was by no means an easy one in our land. Power having passed from the monarchy to the Parliament, it followed soon that now one party, now another, was predominant. Party government may be a necessity, and if each would allow the other fair play when its turn for an "innings" comes, it might answer well. But woe betide us if

> "All are for a party,
> And none are for the State!"

William found it hard work to steer his way among these narrow-minded politicians. His chief comfort was his wife. Mary loved him with a devotion which sometimes, in private life, he was far from deserving. Her character is described in words which would not be unworthy of our own beloved Queen Victoria: "Her behaviour was very exemplary. She read a great deal; she was often busy at work; everything in her was easy and natural; she was singular in great charities to the poor." In 1694 she was attacked with smallpox, and calmly died, "thanking God that she had nothing to do but look up to Him, and submit to His will." William was in an agony of grief. The only pleasure left him was his annual visit to his native land, which he loved with praiseworthy fidelity. But his life was not to be long. Delicate from his birth, it was a marvel how he had borne up through trials physical and mental, enough to shorten the days of the strongest. He was thrown from his horse on the 21st of February 1702, and died on the 8th of March.

William deserves a place in the grateful remembrance of Englishmen, for he came to the rescue of our land from a tyranny which threatened both Church and State. He hated all persecution.

Generous in character, he would not yield to the desire of the Whigs[1] for revenge on the Tories. He scarcely cared to defend himself from the many plots made to assassinate him. He was cold and reserved, save to intimate friends. In battle his courage was proverbial, and his escapes extraordinary. At the battle of the Boyne he remained nineteen hours on horseback, notwithstanding his having been wounded in the shoulder early in the fight. At Landen a musket-shot carried away part of his scarf, and another went through his hat without doing him harm. Although he made no profession of personal religion, he was the champion of Protestantism, as Louis was of Roman Catholicism; and never has England been so great, as when she has held her place as leader amongst the nations, of all who hold the Reformed faith.

Two similar faults are charged against William at different periods in his career—one that at its commencement he failed to punish the murderers of his great rivals, the brothers De Witt; and many years later, that he did not bring to justice the authors of the Massacre of Glencoe. In the first case, he looked upon the De Witts as friends of the French, and therefore untrue to their country. In the second case, he was doubtless misinformed of attending circumstances until after the deed was done, but was to blame for not then denouncing it. Even his enemies, however, allow that he was habitually opposed to all bloodshed except in war.

Two Acts of the greatest importance were passed in the early days of the reign of William and Mary. On the 25th of October 1689 the Declaration of Right was confirmed, which did away with the last shreds of monarchical absolutism. The Act of Settlement of the Crown was passed at the same time, whereby it was declared, "That it hath been found by experience, that it is inconsistent with the welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a Popish prince, or by any king or queen marrying a Papist."

[1] Whigs, a term of reproach given to Scotch rustics, and afterwards applied to the Liberals. Tory is said to be an Irish word meaning a ruffian, applied by their enemies to the more ardent supporters of royalty.

CHAPTER XLII.

ANNE, A.D. 1702–1714—WARS WITH LOUIS XIV.—WHIGS AND TORIES.

ANNE, who now came to the throne, was the second daughter of James II., and younger sister of the late Queen Mary. The popularity which all the talents of William had failed to gain was at once bestowed upon her chiefly because she was an Englishwoman. "I know my heart to be entirely English," she said in her first speech to Parliament, with not very kind allusion to her deceased brother-in-law. She was now thirty-eight years of age. Her life had scarcely been a happy one. Educated as Protestants, she and her sister grew up with small attachment to their father, and his second marriage to an Italian princess probably increased the estrangement between them. Anne married Prince George of Denmark, a man of feeble character, but to whom she was devotedly attached. She had many children, all of whom died in infancy, except one boy, who lived to be twelve years old, but was then cut off, his death giving rise to the important Act of Succession, which made the Crown of England pass away from the house of the Popish Stuarts to the nearest Protestant Hanoverian relatives. The kindly heart of her people felt for the stricken mother, and her good-nature and blameless private life further won their regard. This is all that can be said in her favour. She was narrow-minded and obstinate, and inherited much of the Stuart love for arbitrary power.[1]

[1] She loved to dine in state, and she revived the curious habit called "touching for the king's evil." It was supposed that the touch of the sovereign cured scrofula. William had refused to touch sufferers except once, when, on being much pressed, he touched a woman, saying, "May God give you better judgment."

When Anne was nine years old, a young lady named Sarah Jennings was introduced into her father's household as a companion to her. Sarah was three years older than the princess. This seniority, and her cleverness and strength of will, gave her immense power over Anne, who became devotedly attached to her. Their friendship deepened as they grew up together. At sixteen, Miss Jennings married Captain John Churchill, a rising young officer, who became one of the greatest of English generals. Churchill's first lessons in war were under the veteran French commander Turenne, then fighting against the Dutch. Turenne was partial to him, and often boasted of his courage, calling him his "handsome Englishman." Later, he distinguished himself by defeating James II. in Ireland; but in the reign of William he for a time fell into disgrace for treasonable correspondence with the exiled monarch. Anne took his part, and shared his disgrace.

When Anne became queen, her friendship for Churchill, now Duke of Marlborough, and for his wife, was at first an advantage to the nation. Louis XIV. had again roused the jealousy of all Europe by allowing his grandson to become King of Spain, and thus disturbing the balance of power in Europe. Another series of wars took place against him. Again the only periods of rest on the Continent were the months when the troops went into winter quarters. Every spring saw the great armies of France marching across the fields of Holland and Germany, and the combined armies of the English, Dutch, and Austrians marching against them. Louis had one great advantage. He was sole master of his troops, whereas Marlborough, who was appointed chief of the allied armies, found it as hard to make them act in concert as to keep twenty clocks in time together. In vain victory after victory proved his capacity. The Dutch clogged his movements by sending their deputies to consult with him, and act as a drag on his progress.

At last, in May 1704, he broke away from their trammels, and, at first concealing his design, began a march across Germany with the determination to turn the French back from Vienna, upon which they were advancing. He left the Hague on the 5th of May. The march

occupied about six weeks, during which time he kept his troops in the strictest discipline, but carefully provided for all their wants. On the 8th of June, he met Prince Eugene, a great Italian general, with whom he formed a warm friendship. Eugene expressed surprise at the freshness of the English soldiers, and their cheerful, spirited demeanour. "With such troops," he said, "you must be victorious." The two generals rode side by side at the head of their troops. On the 2nd of June they reached the Danube, and with a tremendous effort scaled and took the strong fort of Schellenberg, overhanging the river. The enemy fled towards the Danube, while the English cavalry came thundering after them, and, the bridge giving way, men, horses, and artillery plunged into the water in awful confusion.

On the night of the 12th of August, Marlborough and Eugene were encamped near Hochstadt, on the Danube, against the great body of the enemy. Marlborough was determined that next day the tide of French invasion should be rolled backwards, or he would perish in the attempt. He spent the night in prayer, and partook early of the communion. A stream had to be passed and a marsh crossed under fire. At two in the morning his camp was astir. By one P.M. the battle was begun, and it went raging on till the evening, when, in the dusk of closing day, Marlborough was able to dash off a note to his wife: "Tell the queen her troops have had a glorious victory." He took three generals, one thousand two hundred officers, and fifteen thousand soldiers prisoners.

It *was* a glorious victory! The battle of Blenheim, as it was called, will ever rank as one of the most important in history. The spell was broken. Louis XIV. was no more held to be invincible, and Europe breathed more freely!

Anne showered honours and glory upon Marlborough, and the nation welcomed him home with enthusiasm.

But glory, like riches, has wings, and often flies swiftly away. A few years later, and, in spite of further great victories, Anne stripped Marlborough of all his offices, forgot all that she owed him, and, with the Tory party, heaped every possible insult upon him. The cause of this violent change in her was twofold. She had become weary of

being tyrannised over by his wife, and, having always clung to the Tories, she joined in the clamour they made to have an end put to the war. There was much, indeed, to be said in favour of peace; but Marlborough and the Whigs were unwilling to throw away the advantages they had so dearly gained, and wished to complete their victories over Louis. What was the use, they argued, of making terms with a monarch who broke agreements as easily as Samson did "the green withs wherewith he was bound, like tow before the fire"?

But Anne hurried on the negotiations with Louis, showing very little regard for the interests of her Allies, and "Peace without Honour" was signed at Utrecht.

Anne was now under the influence of a new favourite, Mrs. Masham, a poor relation of the Duchess of Marlborough, who was dismissed from her office as Mistress of the Stole or Robes. In vain Marlborough pleaded for a whole hour with the queen to retain his wife at court, or at least to postpone her dismissal. Anne passionately insisted, "I will talk of no other business till I have her golden key of office returned."

The change of Ministers was not productive of happiness to Anne. She shrank from the lazy and cunning Harley, and the brilliant but unprincipled Bolingbroke, who were the leaders of the Tory party. Plots were carried on to restore the Stuart family to the throne; but, ere they were ripened, Anne was seized with apoplexy, and died.

Her reign was made illustrious, not only by the victories of the great duke, but also by those of the Earl of Peterborough in Spain, and by the naval triumphs of Admirals Sir Cloudesley Shovel and Sir George Rooke, who took Gibraltar after a difficult siege. An additional lustre was shed on it by the literary activity of the day. Pope, Steele, Swift, and Addison were in the first rank as authors, and amongst others we must not forget Defoe, whose *History of the Plague* is so terribly graphic, and whose story of *Robinson Crusoe* will always be dear to English children.

The union of England and Scotland was completed in this reign

GIBRALTAR FROM THE QUEEN OF SPAIN'S CHAIR.

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through the exertions of Marlborough's friend, the Treasurer Godolphin. So unpopular was it amongst the Scots, that even one of their most intelligent men, referring to the danger of a French invasion of England, said, "Now you have made us slaves, I should like to see you made slaves also!"

DANIEL DEFOE.

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CHAPTER XLIII.

GEORGE I., A.D. 1714–1727—THE FIRST PRETENDER—A GREAT PRIME MINISTER.

George I., Elector of Hanover, who now came to the throne of England, was a greater stranger to the land than even William III. had been. George had never hitherto set foot on our shores, nor had he even learnt our language. He was obliged to transact business with his Ministers in Latin, a tongue with which he and they were alike but imperfectly acquainted. He was plain in his appearance, and undignified; nor was there anything in his private character to command respect or affection, though as a soldier he was known to be not wanting in courage. When very young he had been forced to marry Sophia Dorothea, the beautiful Princess of Zell, against both her wishes and his own. His unfaithfulness and harshness to her made her seek to fly from him with a lover of her early youth, but the plot was discovered. Her unworthy friend was brutally murdered, and she was shut up for life in a lonely castle, and never once allowed to see her children again. Meanwhile George enjoyed himself in the company of the ladies who had provoked her jealousy, and whom he brought to England, where he gave to one the title of Countess of Darlington, and to the other that of Duchess of Kendal; but the English people, who despised them, usually styled the first the Maypole, and the latter the Elephant, with reference to their personal appearance.

The Jacobites[1] or Stuart party naturally thought a foreign king of so commonplace a description could hardly be popular in England.

[1] So called from Jacobus, the Latin for James.

Exaggerated reports were indeed sent to James Louis, son of our James II., of George's unpopularity. He was told that all England was sighing to have a prince of the old line back again, and in return flattering accounts were sent of the personal appearance and virtues of James. A rising in favour of the Pretender, as he is generally called, now took place in Scotland. The Earl of Mar set up his standard at Braemar on the 6th of September 1715, and the Highland clans soon flocked to it. An army was quickly gathered together, which marched southwards with little interruption till they came to the Borders. Five hundred Scots then refused to accompany General M'Intosh into England. With the rest of his troops he pushed on to Preston, which they occupied, and might easily have defended, situated as it is on a steep height, with the river Ribble beneath it. But whether from disappointment that they were not more numerously joined by the English Roman Catholics, or from some other unknown cause, division and timidity now prevailed in the Scotch army. Although expecting an attack from the English, scarcely any defence was made, and they yielded to a force far inferior to their own. On the same day, the main body of James's supporters met with a crushing defeat at Sheriff-muir. But even then the rebellion was not over. James himself landed in Scotland, and tried to rally his friends around him. But his presence had no cheering effect. "If he was disappointed in us," said one of the rebels, "we were tenfold more so in him. We saw nothing in him that looked like spirit. We began to despise him. His countenance looked extremely heavy." It was winter, the snow lay deep on the ground. King George's men, under the Duke of Argyle and General Cadogan, followed James over hill and dale, till, driven to bay near Aberdeen, he gave his soldiers the slip, got off with Mar in a French ship, and left his friends to their fate.

"The Stuart thus a boundless zeal inspires,
Then safe from danger cunningly retires."

Several noblemen were executed for sharing in the conspiracy, and Lord Nithsdale narrowly escaped the same fate, leaving the Tower in the clothes of his wife, who was supposed to have come to bid him a last farewell.

Even this decided defeat did not put an end to Stuart conspiracies. Whenever James could persuade a foreign prince to take up his cause, or whenever any country wished to pick a quarrel with England, rumours of approaching invasion of our land again and again arose. But this, in fact, only tended to raise at last a spirit of loyalty to the Hanoverian monarchs, and so to unite all Englishmen together.[1]

George I. ruled constitutionally; he made no attempt to stretch the regal power. His one aim was "to leave England to itself, and to keep out of it as much as he could, returning to Hanover as often as he could." "The Prime Minister is king in England," was a saying of his successor. This was true. The power of the sovereign was broken. The power of the House of Commons was not yet fully developed. Indeed, the Prime Minister is to this day "the impersonation of a parliamentary majority advising and even controlling the sovereign, and responsible to the Legislature for his ministerial acts."

The earliest Prime Minister who held so high a post of power was Sir Robert Walpole.

> "Those shrewd, strong features scan,
> How strong the sense, how English is the man!"

He was great at finance, and saved England from commercial ruin, when the so-called "South Sea Bubble" burst. This was a company formed to trade in the South Seas, supposed to be flowing with gold and silver. The national debt was to be thus paid off, and all the nation went mad, expecting to be made rich by their speculations. Visions of wealth floated before all eyes. But the scheme was utterly unsound, and only Walpole could get the country out of its difficulties. To Walpole also is due the first step towards Free Trade; while in his Excise Bill, which was fiercely overthrown, he suggested a method of raising money which proved in later days to be of value. But the chief merit of the great Minister was his love of peace. With a strong, steady hand he guided the helm of State, securing quiet at

[1] In one of the Jacobite plots, Bishop Atterbury, celebrated for his learning and ability, took part. While the Scotch Highlanders wished for James, because they, like him, were Roman Catholics, and because they preferred a Scotch James III. to a German George I., Atterbury and other High Churchmen clung to the Stuarts from a belief in their "Divine Right" to the throne, and from dislike to the Whig doctrine of toleration to Dissent.

home and checking wars abroad. "Let well alone" was his rule; and thus for twenty years, in this and the next reign, the prosperity of the land went on deepening and increasing, and law and liberty grew in strength together.

On the 3rd of June 1727, George I. set out for Hanover. On arriving in Germany, a letter was put into his hand from his wife, who had died seven months before. In it she once more protested her innocence, and summoned him to meet her in another world. George was suddenly seized with an apoplectic fit. Partially recovering, he exclaimed, "Osnabrück! Osnabrück!" urging the coachman to drive on fast to that place. But death, "that pale horseman whom no postilion can outride," was upon him. He expired in the carriage on the 11th of June, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

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CHAPTER XLIV.

GEORGE II., A.D. 1727-1760—THE YOUNG PRETENDER—PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM—THE WEST AND THE EAST.

GEORGE II., who now quietly succeeded his father, had spent many years in England, and was, therefore, familiar with our language and people. He was a brave little man, and had distinguished himself fighting against the French, specially at the battle of Dettingen.[1] His abilities were small, but were supplemented by the superior gifts and understanding of his charming and devoted wife, Caroline of Anspach. She steadily supported Sir Robert Walpole as Prime Minister, and when dying committed George specially to his care.

In 1745, Charles Edward, grandson of James II., made a gallant effort to regain England for his father. Of winning manners, this "Bonnie Laddie" at first carried everything before him. He set up his standard at Perth, and in a few days nine hundred Highlanders gathered around him. "His army swelled like a torrent after rain." He went to Edinburgh, and "pleasant were his dreams" at Holyrood Palace. He beat the army of Sir John Cope at Prestonpans, and returned to Edinburgh, a hundred pipers playing before him, "The king shall have his own again!" He marched with his army southwards, and found himself soon in the heart of England at Derby. But here shades of disappointment fell over him, and his blue eyes began to look sad and anxious. For the English Roman Catholics did *not* rise to help him, and the French fleet did *not* appear on our shores to support him. The English army, if slowly mustered,

[1] George celebrated this victory by a yearly *fête*, at which he always wore the suit of clothes he had on in the fight.

must yet soon be on him! Timid counsels prevailed. The invaders retraced their steps northwards, and were soon followed by a powerful army under the Duke of Cumberland, brother of the king; were followed onwards and onwards, till at Culloden, near Inverness, a terrible battle was fought, which crushed the hopes of the Stuarts for ever. Charles Edward was forced to fly, and only escaped by travelling disguised as a waiting-maid to a brave girl, Miss Flora Macdonald.[1] He afterwards got safely abroad, and, alas! ended his days long afterwards as a drunkard in Rome.

George II. kept Sir Robert Walpole as Prime Minister as long as he could. "I parted with him once against my will," said he, "and I will not part with him again." But the veteran chief was obliged to retire in 1742, and in 1745 he died.

The honours of Sir Robert Walpole were won in peace. A greater man than he now arose, whose glory was won by a policy of war. This was William Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham. Delicate in health from boyhood, he entered Parliament when twenty-seven years of age, and his first speeches won him fame as an orator. His eloquence "rolled like a torrent in whose beauty there is something awful." George disliked him, and said he could not understand his long sentences. But he could not do without Pitt, and the people adored "the Great Commoner," as they called him. He came into power at a critical period. War had broken out on the Continent between Maria Theresa of Austria and Frederick the Great, first King of Prussia. England and France had as usual taken opposite sides, England at first aiding the queen, and later the king, and France first supporting the king, and afterwards the queen. Our arms had been unsuccessful, and a deep depression had seized our people. "I can save the nation and no one else can," said Pitt. He saw the advantage to England of a rising Protestant kingdom abroad, and therefore strongly assisted Frederick. He saw that the moment was come

[1] She suffered for her heroism, being confined for some months as a prisoner in London. However, at the end of that time she was allowed to return to Scotland, and the English Jacobin ladies made her a handsome present of money. She married a gentleman who had also assisted in the prince's escape. She is described as a gentle, quiet lady.

when France should be opposed in America, if she were not to become the great colonial power of the world. He sent Wolfe, a pious young officer, whose ability his quick eye had detected, to fight the battle with her for Canada. Wolfe soon gained an important victory at Ticonderoga, but afterwards encountered so many difficulties that he wrote sadly home, in failing health, "My constitution is broken, and there is nothing done for it." But he was then on the eve of, as it

QUEBEC.

were, *doing everything by one stroke*, in taking the proud city of Quebec, which was supposed to be impregnable. Quebec stands upon the steep heights of Abraham, at the foot of which flows the river St. Lawrence. In dead of night Wolfe brought his 5000 men down the stream in boats and rafts. As they stole along, he and his officers conversed in undertones, and the scholarly young general repeated

the whole of Gray's beautiful "Elegy in a Country Churchyard." "I would rather have written that poem," said he, "than take Quebec." In the early dawn, his men climbed, goat-like, in single file up the cliffs. The surprised enemy fought valiantly as always. Wolfe was wounded. "Hold me up," he said, "that the men may not see me fall." But the wound was mortal. They bore him to the rear. Hearing shouts of "They run! they run!" he asked, "Who run?" "The French," was the answer. "Then I die happy," said Wolfe, and soon expired. Montcalm, the French general, was likewise hit in the breast, and, as he lay dying, said, "I am happy to die, and not see the surrender of Quebec." Thus the conquered and the conquering hero passed into another world within a few minutes of each other.

By this victory the die was cast! Canada was to become, not French, but English, and to be a second home for our sons and daughters.

While this was going on in the West, another young Englishman, very unlike Wolfe, except in courage, was laying the foundations of another empire for us in the East. Robert Clive was sent to India as the last resource for a wild, passionate, and self-willed youth. He pined at first almost to starvation at a clerk's desk. Madras then being taken by the French, he escaped in the guise of a Mahometan. Gathering a little band of Englishmen, he seized, and then defended Arcot, slaying 400 assailants, while he only lost five or six men. Dupleix, a clever Frenchman, had determined to make the name and power of his country famous in India. He founded a city and called it Dupleix Fatihabad, the City of the Victory of Dupleix. Clive took this city, and razed it to the ground.

In 1757, a Mogul ruler, Surajah Dowlah, took Calcutta, and caused a large number of English captives to perish in a small dungeon, known as the Black Hole. One hundred and forty-six persons were thrust one night into a dungeon not twenty feet square, with only two small windows, and this in the very hottest season of the year. Many went raving mad, and fought with each other to get nearest the windows. At two in the morning not more than fifty

remained alive. As the heat of the day increased, the sufferings of these wretched men increased. At length the door was opened, and twenty-three ghastly survivors were brought out, whom those who had seen them a few hours before could not have recognised. Clive went forth to revenge this horrible outrage. "Daring and always daring" was his habit, and the only fit method for a handful of men against unnumbered but undisciplined foes. With three thousand men, against forty thousand infantry, fifteen thousand cavalry, and guns manned by Frenchmen, Clive won the famous battle of Plassey (June 23, 1757), which subdued at once "an empire larger and more populous than that of Great Britain."

Such were the events which made the reign of George II. an epoch in English history. Little dreaming, probably, how great would be their results, the old king died suddenly, on the 25th of October, A.D. 1760.

CHAPTER XLV.

GEORGE III., A.D. 1760–1820—WAR OF INDEPENDENCE IN AMERICA

GEORGE III. now succeeded his grandfather, for his father, Frederick, a vain, ambitious young prince, had died many years before. George had been brought up under the care of his mother, Princess Augusta, who happily guarded him from the dissolute ways of the court, but who was incapable of training him to be a constitutional king. "Be a king, George!" was her one often-repeated maxim, and a king he determined to be, unhindered by Lords, Commons, or Prime Ministers. He was a good man, and wished to rule only in accordance with the laws of the land; but ruler in earnest he wished to be, and in fact one of the Parliaments held in his reign was called "The Regal Parliament," because in it the influence of the king was so largely and unconstitutionally exercised.

In the war with France for the possession of Canada, our colonists had fought side by side with British soldiers. But when that conflict was over, they became more and more anxious to have their own troubles redressed. The descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers, who had fled from oppression at home to freedom in America, were now become a great people. They formed many States, whose names told of their various histories. There was Virginia, called after the Maiden Queen, Elizabeth; Maryland, named after Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I.; Pennsylvania, the Quaker State, called after William Penn, its founder; North and South Carolina, reminding us of the Stuart Charleses; and Louisiana, named after the monarch of France. Swedes and Dutch had added to the Anglo-Saxon population. To these various States charters of rights had been granted at various times. They were

quite independent of each other, but one and all had complaints to bring against the mother-country. Neglect is perhaps as hard to bear as actual wrong, and the colonists thought themselves neglected. They declared that shoals of letters sent by them to the English Government were never read, and that so ignorant were British Ministers of America, that they neither knew nor cared whether New England were not an island, or whether Jamaica did not lie in the Mediterranean Sea! More seriously they complained of the navigation laws, which greatly hindered their commerce with any but British ports. They objected also to having British troops quartered upon them; and, above all, they maintained that England had no right to lay taxes upon them without their own consent. "No representation, no taxation," was, they said, a true political axiom, and the Colonies were not represented in the British Parliament. They had no access to the sovereign. Their affairs were managed by a Board of Trade, the head of which they accused of looking upon the States simply as a source whence revenue might be raised to lighten taxation at home.

Such were the grievances which went on rankling in the breasts of our American fellow-subjects, and which they brought again and again, with ever-increasing earnestness, before the home authorities. But they met with no response. On the contrary, in 1765, a new impost was laid upon them. Lord Granville brought in and passed the famous Stamp Act, a tax upon all legal duties in the Colonies. This aroused the fiercest opposition in America. Riots broke out. The vessels in Boston harbour hoisted their colours half-mast high. The muffled bells of the churches tolled as if for a death-knell. The frightened tax-collectors resigned their posts.

Tidings of these disturbances caused great excitement in the British Parliament. Many different views were held as to the respective rights and duties of the mother-country and of the Colonies. Some held that England had no right to levy taxes on the Colonies at all. This view was powerfully maintained by Pitt. He had been ill when the Stamp Act was passed. "I was ill and in bed," he said; "if I could have endured to be carried, I would have solicited some kind hand to have laid me on this floor, to have borne my testimony against

this Act." Some held that England had the right to impose taxes, but that at the present time it was inexpedient to exercise the right. Lord Rockingham held this view, and it was eloquently put forth by his secretary, Burke. A third party, which included the king, his Minister, Lord North, and his so-called friends, stoutly maintained the right of England to impose taxes, and their determination to do so. "These rebels," said they, "*must* be subdued." But in 1766, Lord Rockingham repealed the Stamp Act, the grace of the concession being, however, somewhat lessened by a previous Declaratory Act, asserting the supreme authority of Government.

A slight lull now followed, but, some fresh taxes being unhappily passed by Charles Townsend, President of the Board of Trade, in the following year, the excitement in America broke out afresh. Three years later, most of these taxes were removed, but one, the tax on tea, was left like a single arrow to rankle in the wound!

The colonists determined to do without tea, and whoever did not agree to this was looked on as a traitor.

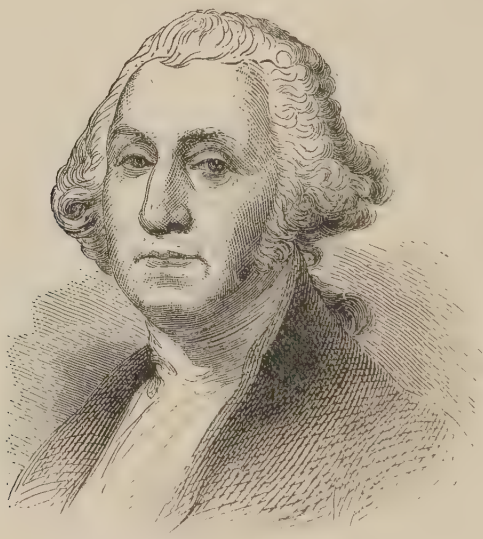
Lord North attempted to introduce some East Indian tea into America with a reduced tax. This measure, intended kindly, was received as an insult, and acted as fuel to a fire.

On the 28th of December 1773 occurred what has been called "The Boston Tea-Party." Three ships laden with tea had just arrived, and a meeting was called to consider what should be done with their contents. Samuel Adams, a man of mark and ability, presided. A messenger was sent to the governor of the town to request that the ships might be allowed to return to England without unlading the tea. It was six o'clock in the evening, and quite dark, when he returned with the answer, that the ships could not leave the port, as they were not properly unladen. Samuel Adams then rose and said, "This meeting has done all it can do to save the country." At that instant a loud war-whoop was heard, and some forty or fifty men, disguised as Indians, rushed to the wharves, boarded the tea-ships, and in three hours emptied the 350 chests into the sea! The people stood so still that the opening of each chest could be distinctly heard, and then "all went off as quietly as if it had been a Sabbath day."

In April 1775 the thirteen States combined as the United Colonies, and on the 4th of July 1776 they sent forth their famous "Declaration of Independence."

Perhaps some concessions at an earlier period might have satisfied the colonists, but now they were determined to break loose from Britain altogether, and the great Dr. Franklin, their leader, set this object before them.

It seemed unlikely they should win in the contest, and for seven weary years war went on with varying successes. But the Americans had a general worthy of the cause of liberty. George Washington was



GEORGE WASHINGTON.

not one who could say, like Marlborough, that his soldiers had never been defeated, but he was a man whom no defeat could discourage, and whose perseverance equalled his valour. He and his soldiers bore the greatest hardships together, cold, heat, want of food. Baffled in one scheme, he would quickly make another, and sometimes fell upon the enemy like a thunderbolt when no danger was expected.[1]

[1] In the time of Washington a Christian man journeyed to the general to beseech the life of a neighbour, sentenced to death. He was told his "unfortunate friend" must perish. "He is my worst enemy," said the intercessor. "And have you," asked Washington, "walked sixty miles for your enemy's sake? I grant you his pardon." What a revenge was this!

"You cannot conquer America!" Pitt had once exclaimed, in the midst of a fiery speech. "If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms, never, never, never!" These words expressed the feelings of the colonists, who, alas! had come to look upon England, the home of their forefathers, as a foreign land. They did *not* rest till our generals were defeated, and our soldiers either slain or forced to surrender. In 1777, General Burgoyne was compelled to yield, with his whole army, to Gates, the American general. On the 15th of March 1782, Lord Cornwallis won a last and gallant victory over the Americans at Guildford in Carolina. In October of the same year his situation became desperate, and after a fruitless attempt to defend the little village of Yorktown, he was compelled to surrender.

There was great dismay in England when the news of this defeat arrived. Pacing wildly across the room, Lord North exclaimed, "It is all over!" and immediately resigned his post.

George III. was compelled to acknowledge the independence of the new republic. Not many months afterwards he calmly received the first ambassadors of the United States, and wished them prosperity in the future; but who can tell what bitter regret filled his royal breast, that in his reign, and partly owing to his treatment, England had lost those glorious States across the sea, States founded by some of the noblest of her sons!

CHAPTER XLVI.

GEORGE III.—WARREN HASTINGS

On a summer day in A.D. 1740, a slight, poorly-clad boy of seven years of age might have been seen lying full-stretched on the banks of a rivulet which joins the Isis, and gazing intently on the noble woods of an adjoining estate called Daylesford. He was day-dreaming, as boys are wont to do; but on his dream hung wonderful issues for England and the world. That lad's name was Warren Hastings. Daylesford had once been the home of his now ruined family, and on that summer day the lad resolved that he would regain it. It was a strong resolve that only deepened as years went on, and acted upon him as a powerful and constant stimulus to exertion.

A relative removed Warren from the village, and placed him at Westminster School. There he soon distinguished himself, and at fourteen he was first in an examination for the foundation. His name may be seen to this day in gilded letters on the walls of his dormitory. He began to look forward to a studentship at Oxford, when his hopes were all blasted by the death of his kind guardian, and the determination of a distant relative into whose care he consequently passed, to send him to Calcutta as an office clerk. But disappointments often prove stepping-stones to higher things than we dream of. So it was in this case. India became a sphere for Warren Hastings' highest talents, and opened for him the way to Daylesford, and—to glory!

He arrived in India in 1750, and passed some time at a factory near Calcutta. Clive was then absent in England, and the Nabob or native ruler of Bengal took the opportunity to make war against the English, and to murder some of them, as we have seen, in the Black

CALCUTTA AS SEEN FROM THE MUSEUM.

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Hole. Warren Hastings was taken prisoner, but contrived to make his escape, and as soon as Clive arrived and took the field, the youth gladly renounced his clerk's office, and enlisted under him. Clive quickly detected his talent, and at the end of the war appointed him agent at a native court. Ere long he gained a place at the Council of India, and soon became the chief person in it. Meanwhile Clive returned to England, was brilliantly welcomed, and made a peer, with the title of Baron of Plassey. He was not allowed, however, to enjoy his laurels quietly. Bitter accusations were brought against him of bribery and oppression, and, though acquitted, his proud spirit was broken, his nerves shattered, and he put an end to his own life.

The fact was, Englishmen could not in the least realise the difficulties of the position in which their countrymen in India were placed. That vast country, ten times larger than England, Scotland, and Ireland together, had been invaded by the Mahometans at the commencement of the eleventh century. They founded a grand empire, of which Delhi was the capital. Two hundred years had now tested the value of their rule. Luxury, self-indulgence, and cruelty reigned in their palaces. Misery and every abject vice prevailed amongst their Hindoo subjects. A number of petty rulers professed to obey the emperor, and were constantly at war with each other. In fact, the history of India was so full of tales of bloodshed that it resembled the account of some horrible nightmare. It was impossible for Clive or Hastings to take a step without becoming entangled in the quarrels of the Nabobs.

Warren Hastings endeavoured to promote the happiness of the people, and to a certain extent he succeeded. He passed many wise and merciful regulations, and removed many heavy taxes. Years afterwards he said, "I could have gone from Calcutta to Moorshedabad, and thence to Patna and Benares, without a guard or a sepoy, without any protection but what was to be found in the goodwill and affection of the natives."

But peaceful rule was impossible in India. For twenty years he was perpetually at war, and again and again it appeared as if all that Clive had won would be lost, and the English would be forced to leave

India. Only Warren Hastings' skill and courage prevented such a misfortune.

His first great war was against Hyder Ali, ruler of one of the southern States of India, a man of great talent, and of equal hatred to the English. The French in India helped him, and for a time the Mahrattas, a fierce and warlike nation usually opposed to him, became his allies. He scoured the country with his light cavalry, and his son, Tippoo Saib, fell suddenly upon Madras, at the head of five hundred men, who wasted all the surrounding country like a flight of locusts. But there were heroes amongst the British officers in those days. (When are there not?) Colonel Smith attacked and completely defeated Tippoo, and thus ended the first war with the sovereign of Mysore.

To strengthen himself against Hyder Ali, Warren Hastings made a treaty with the Nabob of Oudh, by which he agreed to assist him against the Rohillas, an Afghan race who had long been settled in the neighbourhood of his State. The English soldiers conquered the Rohillas, and the men of Oudh enjoyed taking the spoil. Hastings was afterwards severely blamed for allowing his men to be employed in this war.

About three years later, a great confederacy against the English and the Nabob of Oudh was made by the Mahrattas, Sikhs, and Rohillas. Sweeping westward, the Mahrattas threatened Bombay. Again the French assisted our numerous foes. It was a difficult crisis. Hastings took the bold step of sending off his native troops to fight the French and the Mahrattas. Right across India, from Calcutta to Surat, from the Ganges to the Gulf of Bombay, a distance of at least 1000 miles, the faithful sepoys marched. "Be assured," wrote Hastings, "this march contributed more to our military reputation than, perhaps, our most splendid action." Colonel Goddard, their skilful commander, soon afterwards won a decided victory, and Colonel Popham, another hero, took Gwalior, one of the strongest forts of India. So happily ended this dangerous war.

Yet another and still more critical struggle remained to be waged. After seven years of preparation, Hyder Ali again took the

field, and marched forth from Seringapatam, his capital, with a staff of French officers, 100 pieces of artillery, 1500 infantry, and 28,000 cavalry. One British army, under Colonel Baillie, was cut to pieces. Even Warren Hastings was almost overwhelmed! It was a terrible crisis! But Sir Eyre Coote, though himself sick unto death, defeated Hyder Ali, on the 1st of July 1781, so decidedly that the old chief raved and tore his clothes, bewailing, "The defeat of many Baillies will not destroy these English!" Soon afterwards he died. Tippoo, or the Tiger, as his name signifies, continued the war for a time, till he too was tired out, and in March 1784 a treaty was concluded with him by Hastings.

To obtain the money for carrying on these wars, Hastings had resorted to measures for which he was severely and deservedly blamed, and to which only dire necessity, as he thought, compelled him. He afterwards ruled the country for several years with peace and prosperity. He was the first Governor-General of India.

But he had bitter enemies, and when he returned to England he had to endure a trial which lasted from 1788 to 1795, and in which he had to defend himself against the overwhelming eloquence of Burke. He was finally, however, acquitted. Mistakes he had made, some acts of cruelty he had committed, but whatever he had done, it was with no selfish aims. He had solely desired to serve his country. But England rightly desired it to be known that even for her sake not a single Hindoo should be oppressed. We must remember, however, that the natives of India regarded Hastings as a benefactor, and his rule was doubtless a thousandfold better than that of their native or Mahometan Nabobs.

The last twenty years of his life were spent at Daylesford, where he died in the eighty-sixth year of his age, on the 22nd of August 1818.

CHAPTER XLVII.

GEORGE III., A.D. 1760–1820—WILLIAM PITT THE YOUNGER—WAR WITH FRANCE.

William Pitt, the great Prime Minister and Earl of Chatham, died in 1778. Almost his last breath was spent in an impassioned protest in the House of Lords against the separation of the American Colonies

from England. He was taken ill whilst speaking, was carried home, and died a few days afterwards. He left a son who bore his Christian name, and who proved well worthy of his father's fame.

William Pitt the younger was born on the 28th of May 1759, and was his parents' second son. "I am glad I am not the eldest son; I want to speak in the House of Commons like papa," he exclaimed, when only seven years old! He was carefully educated, and was exceedingly

industrious. When a scholar at Cambridge, "he never on any occasion spent an evening out of the college walls." He early made politics his study, and, on entering Parliament, he came out, like his father before him, "a ready-made orator." He became Chancellor of the Exchequer when only twenty-three, and Prime Minister when twenty-nine, having in fact refused this high post at an earlier period. His early efforts were for reform, and he tried to reduce the number of rotten boroughs, and to give their franchise to the counties. Those were his happiest years. Heavy and unexpected clouds were gathering over all Europe, and hard and anxious days were before the young Prime Minister.

In May 1789 the great Revolution broke out in France. That country had never recovered from the effects of the wars of Louis XIV., and since his death it had been sadly misgoverned. In the wretched reign of Louis XV. the army and navy had been neglected, the court had been fearfully corrupt, the nobility looked down on the common people, much as North Americans used to look down on the negroes. The peasantry had few rights and heavy taxes, from some of which the wealthier classes were entirely free. Louis XVI. endeavoured to lighten their burdens, but in any liberal measures he was always overborne by a dead weight of opposition from the upper classes. He was likewise so feeble in character, that, if he took one forward step, he was likely directly afterwards to take two backwards. The discontent of the people grew more and more deep. Rumours of the War of Independence in America woke them up to feel that "a man's a man for a' that," though he may not be of noble descent, nor have ever been to court. The Revolution broke out. If the people had had wise leaders, all might have been well. Even sober Englishmen could not severely blame the destruction of the castle-prison of the Bastile, nor the sweeping away in one night of all the extravagant privileges of the nobility.

But a passion for destruction and bloodshed soon showed itself. The palace of the Tuileries was attacked. The prisons were filled with supposed Royalists, and in September 1792 they were deliberately murdered, during four days of massacre. The king and queen were

put to death. Attempts were widely made to stir up foreign nations against their sovereigns.

Startled and alarmed, Austria, Prussia, Germany, Sweden, and Denmark declared war against France. In 1793, William Pitt recalled our ambassador from Paris, and the French Republic declared war against us.

From this period till 1815, with short intermissions, there was war between France and England.

At first France appeared "like one besieged city," so surrounded was she by enemies. But that state of things was soon completely altered by the skill of her generals. One after another of her foes was defeated. An English army under the Duke of York had to surrender, and return from Flanders to England. All looked very dark for us. but comfort came quickly in the doings of our navy.

In December 1793, Lord Hood destroyed the French Mediterranean fleet off Toulon; the town, however, being taken by Napoleon Buonaparte, then first seen in arms against us. In June 1794, Lord Howe won a hard sea-fight off Brest. On the 4th of February 1797, Admiral Jarvis, with a force of fifteen vessels, beat the fleet of the Spaniards, then in league with the French, with twenty-seven vessels. On the 11th of Oct. of the same year, Admiral Duncan beat the Dutch at Camperdown.

These victories were followed by those of England's favourite naval hero, Lord Nelson.

Buonaparte had arrived in Egypt. The fleet which had brought him there lay at anchor in Aboukir Bay. "Before this time to-morrow," said Nelson, on the 1st of August 1798, "I shall have gained a peerage or Westminster Abbey." The French force was in a very strong position, and more numerous than ours.

"What will the world say if we succeed?" exclaimed Captain Barry. "There is no *if* in the question!" replied Nelson; "though who may live to tell the tale is a different question." So skilfully did he order the attack, that victory was certain within the first half-hour. The French Admiral's ship exploded. Nelson ordered his men to give every help to the drowning sailors. Himself badly wounded, he would not allow the doctor to attend him till, as he said, "his turn came."

It was the generosity and gentleness of Nelson's nature, combined with his gallantry, which made him so dear to his country, and made it so bitterly mourn when, in his last great battle of Trafalgar,—that battle for which he gave the signal, "England expects every man to do his duty,"—he himself fell, mortally wounded, on the 21st of October 1805.

While our navy maintained the honour of England abroad, William Pitt was being worn out with anxieties at home. He had to withstand a strong Whig party, led by his rival in eloquence, Charles Fox. He had a very difficult post to fill with his sovereign, for George III. was subject to attacks of lunacy, which any excitement tended to bring on. One such attack, as he afterwards affirmed, was partly occasioned by Pitt's conduct. Ireland was in a miserable state, and Pitt desired to improve it. He thought it his duty to extend the franchise to Roman Catholics, there and in England. This George strongly opposed, considering that to grant it would be inconsistent with his coronation oath, to do nothing against the interests of the Protestant religion. Pitt was obliged to yield to the objections of George on this point. He succeeded, however, in passing the Act for the union of Great Britain and Ireland in 1800, the only way by which one or other of two misfortunes could be avoided in Ireland, either a Protestant minority ruling a Roman Catholic majority, or a Catholic majority governing a Protestant minority.

Meanwhile victory after victory was being won by the French abroad. Each appeared visibly to affect the health of Pitt. Looking at the map of Europe after Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz, he said, "Roll up that map. It will not be wanted for many years," meaning that all the landmarks had been quite swept away. He died on the 23rd of January 1806, his last sighs being for his country, for which, and not for himself, he had lived. He was buried beside his father in Westminster Abbey. "I have nowhere," wrote Gibbon, the historian, "met with his parallel, who at so early a period of life discharged so important a trust with so much credit to himself, and with so much advantage to his country."

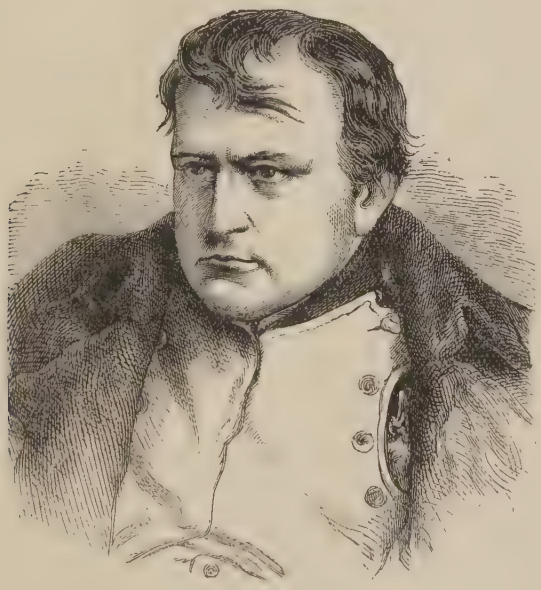
CHAPTER XLVIII.

GEORGE III.—WAR WITH FRANCE—BUONAPARTE AND WELLINGTON.

It was no wonder that William Pitt had been distressed by the victories of Napoleon Buonaparte. They were simply amazing. He was, in fact, one of the most remarkable men who have appeared in history. Born in Ajaccio, in the island of Corsica, on the 15th of August 1769, he received his military education in France, and early gave proofs of superior abilities. When the Revolution broke out, he took the Republican side, and, having saved the National Government at a moment of great peril, he was made general, first of the Army of the Interior, and then of that of Italy. In a few months he returned triumphantly to Paris, having defeated several Austrian armies in succession, crushed the Duke of Lombardy, and founded two new republics, which were to be subordinate to France. The Directory or governing body of Paris became jealous of his fame, and were glad to favour a scheme he designed for conquest in the East. "The West is too small," he would say; "Europe is but a molehill. All great glories come from the East!" "How strange it would be," he added, "if a little Corsican sergeant became King of Jerusalem!" On the 19th of May 1798 he sailed from Toulon for Egypt, and soon after landing there he won a great battle over the Mamelukes. Cairo surrendered to him, and Lower Egypt was conquered.

But Napoleon's "destiny," as he called it, was soon thwarted by the power which was in the end to overcome him. The victory of Nelson destroyed his fleet. Sir Sydney Smith landed his sailors to help in the defence of Acre, and accomplished this so fully that the

French were obliged to retreat. They made their painful way back to Alexandria, and Napoleon, hastily leaving them, returned to Paris. He soon made people forget his Eastern defeats by the brilliancy of his new campaigns in Italy, where he appeared, like some terrible apparition, having forced his way across the Alps, amidst tremendous difficulties. The greatness of his victories roused his ambition to a pitch well-nigh insane. France was to be the "grand nation" of Europe, with him at its head, to dictate his wishes to subordinate princes. He was crowned Emperor of France and King of



NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

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the Romans in 1804, and, parting with Josephine, his devoted wife, he married Maria Louisa, daughter of the Emperor of Austria, This was the high tide of his glory. But men need not to have despaired of shaking off his tyranny. He had roused against him two passions which must always in the end prevail, the love of country and the love of freedom. There was, indeed, a time when he had compelled almost all Europe into alliance with himself, and Great Britain stood alone against him. England itself was threatened with invasion. But

never once did she quail or shrink. Every heart echoed the words of her poet—

> "It is not to be thought of that the flood
> Of British freedom, . . .
> That this most famous stream, in bogs and sands
> Should perish. . .
> We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
> That Shakespeare spake—the faith and morals hold
> Which Milton held." [1]

It was the turn of the British army to maintain the honour of its country as splendidly as the navy had done. Sir Ralph Abercrombie had already begun its triumphs by the complete rout of the army which Napoleon had left in occupation of Egypt, and had thus dispelled, like morning mists, his anticipations of glory in the East.

Amongst Napoleon's unjustifiable attempts at empire was that of the conquest of Spain and Portugal. He succeeded, chiefly by trickery, in ousting the Spanish king, and set his brother Joseph to reign in his stead. The English Government despatched Sir John Moore to Spain, with a fine army, to oppose him, but Moore was obliged to retreat as rapidly as he could before the overwhelming force which Napoleon moved against him, under Soult. He reached Corunna on the coast, and there won a victory, in which he fell, but which secured the embarkation of his troops for England.

Once more Napoleon thought he was to be master of the field, and to hold Spain as he had held Italy. But there was an enemy to encounter him yet, worthy as a soldier to be matched even with him.

Amongst those who had visited William Pitt on his deathbed was Lord Wellesley, Governor of India. It was to him that the dying statesman is supposed to have addressed the following words about his brother, Arthur Wellesley:—"I never met any military officer with whom it was so satisfactory to converse. He states every difficulty before he undertakes any service; but none after he has undertaken it." It was this "Arthur" who became the conqueror of Napoleon. Born in the same year with the French emperor, he too

[1] Wordsworth.

received his training as a soldier in France. He had already won a name by his victories in India. He was now sent to the Peninsula to retrieve our failures there. His first efforts were hindered by the timidity of his superior officers; but in 1809 he was sent thither a second time, now in full command of our troops. Five years of stern conflict lay before him. His difficulties were enormous. The first Spanish general with whom he had to co-operate was an incapable old man, who had to be lifted into his saddle, and held there by two pages! The British troops being up in arms one morning at three o'clock, a message came that General Cuesta was in bed, and must not be disturbed till seven! So languid were the Spaniards in their own cause, so stingy in furnishing supplies to the British soldiers, that Wellington withdrew from their country to Portugal. He now shaped to himself a grand scheme for defence and attack, which he carried out with steady determination through the following years. "I have never," he once said, "failed to do what I have made up my mind to do." He formed lines of defence in the rocky heights of Torres-Vedras above Lisbon, which Massena attempted time after time to break in vain. Army after army was hurled against him, 30,000 men, 50,000 men, 80,000 men! Napoleon's best generals, Soult, Massena, Marmont, Junot, Victor, one after another were defeated by him. He never lost a gun. He never lost a battle.

Once, indeed, he was forced to make a long and difficult retreat, before troops so numerous that it would have been suicidal to meet them in battle. But such a retreat was almost as glorious as a victory. At last he saw the desired result of his magnificent strategy before him. Portugal saved, he won victory after victory in Spain. He drove the French back, an unwilling flood of brave but conquered men, back to the heights of the Pyrenees. He beat Soult again and again amongst those heights. He advanced to Toulouse, and on to Bordeaux, where he heard that the Allies had defeated Napoleon and entered Paris. Joining them there, peace was concluded, and the fallen emperor sent to Elba.[1] But soon Napoleon made his escape to France, and the words of the Austrian sovereign to Wellington were fulfilled: "You

[1] An island between Corsica and Central Italy.

will have to save Europe again." At the great battle of Waterloo, in co-operation with Blücher, the Prussian general, our champion was finally victorious, and Napoleon was sent to end his career in lonely exile in St. Helena.[1]

Napoleon had won his victories by unfailing military instinct, which always saw at a glance the way to win a battle, or successfully carry out a campaign. No attempt was too difficult for him to make. The boldness and skill of his arrangements were only equalled by the manner in which he executed them. If he had been content to defend and rule his own country, he might have left behind him a glorious name, for his talents were great alike as a ruler and a warrior. But he was a slave to ambition, and that made him mean, untruthful, cruel, and revengeful.

Wellington won his victories by cool, careful thought, and undismayed perseverance. He thought only of his duty to God and his country. He ever held back his hand from spoils and gifts, and at the end of his life could truly say that "no man could charge him with ever having said what he did not mean." An honoured old age awaited him. His brilliant victories, Talavera, Busaco, Vittoria, Waterloo; his terrible and successful sieges, such as Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo, will never be forgotten, and his name will for ever be enshrined in the hearts of his countrymen.

The monarch for whom he fought knew nothing of his great general's dangers or triumphs. The last nine years of his life George III. was permanently insane. His private as well as his public career had been greatly chequered. A good, true-hearted man, devoted to his country, he was during most of his reign greatly beloved by the nation. He died on the 29th of January 1820.

[1] An island, about 47 miles square, in the South Atlantic Ocean, belonging to England.

CHAPTER XLIX.

GEORGE IV., A.D. 1820–1830—ABOLITION OF ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES—WILLIAM IV.—ABOLITION OF SLAVERY—THE REFORM BILL.

THE change seemed slight when George IV. came to the throne, for he had governed England (and that not amiss) as Regent during the last nine years. His coronation, however, was celebrated with unusual splendour. But the most remarkable incident in connection with it, was that his wife, the Queen of England, was not allowed to be present at it. The story of this lady is short and sad.

During his youth, George IV., as Prince of Wales, had indulged in all manner of dissipation, and in many love-affairs, which he had varied by marrying a Roman Catholic lady, named Fitzherbert. This marriage he afterwards shamelessly denied, when he desired to make what is called a State alliance. Caroline, Princess of Brunswick, came to England to be his bride. He appears to have hated her before she arrived, and still more afterwards. He was half-drunk when he presented himself at the altar as her bridegroom. He treated her with the utmost insolence and neglect. The unfortunate princess could only have safely filled her unhappy position by extreme prudence and forbearance. But of these qualities she had no share at all. She was high-spirited, self-willed, and foolish. Twice over her husband brought a charge of unfaithfulness to him against her. England was divided between her friends and foes. Lord Brougham defended her with irresistible force, and she was acquitted—acquitted, but not replaced in her rightful position as queen. And so, on this splendid Coronation Day, she stood at the doors of Westminster Abbey, vainly demanding admittance, and was dryly told that "she could not enter without

a ticket." Soon afterwards she died, her last request being that her body should be buried in her own land, with the inscription, "Here lies Caroline of Brunswick, the injured Queen of England."

But the reign of George IV. was remarkable for more than the queen's melancholy history.

In it, George Canning rose from a low position to become Prime Minister, and to dazzle society by his brilliant talents. He had the merit of upholding the cause of liberty in foreign lands, whilst at the same time he carefully abstained from interference in their domestic affairs.

After the death of Canning came on the great contest for or against doing away with the disabilities of Roman Catholics. The Bill was brought in by Lord John Russell. It gave rise to great excitement both in Parliament and in the nation at large. On the one hand, it was contended that it was dangerous to give political power to Roman Catholics, because by their religion they are bound to acknowledge the temporal power of the Pope, and owe to him obedience and allegiance prior to that due to any merely earthly sovereign. It was remembered how unhappily for England this power and double allegiance had worked in olden times, how John in the thirteenth and Mary in the sixteenth centuries had done homage to the Popes, how James II. had endeavoured to force back the Roman Catholic faith upon our country. What had occurred, it was said, might occur again. On the other hand, it was urged that every free-born Briton has a right to equal political privileges, and ought not to forfeit one of the most valuable because of his religious opinions. To refuse his just claims was to tempt him to disloyalty. Moreover, when the Act of Union between England and Ireland was passed, William Pitt had promised the Irish Roman Catholics relief from these disabilities. It was not only, it was said, just, but necessary, that this promise should be fulfilled. The Duke of Wellington, Prime Minister at this epoch, and Sir Robert Peel, then a rising statesman, strongly urged this latter plea. "If it were not passed," said the duke, "there would be civil war; and," he added, "I am one of those who have probably passed a longer period of my life in war than most men, and principally in

civil war, and I must say that, if I could avoid, by any sacrifice whatever, even one month of civil war, I would sacrifice my life in order to do it."

These arguments finally prevailed, and the Bill was passed, enabling Roman Catholics to sit in Parliament, on making the usual profession of loyalty, in April 1829.[1]

It is in no unkind spirit towards our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects many feel, that, while not for a moment wishing to limit their political rights, Englishmen are bound to watch carefully against the encroachments of Rome. The claims which the Romish Church has never renounced are certain to be advanced upon every opportunity.

On the 26th of June 1830, George IV. died, and was succeeded by his brother, William, Duke of Clarence.

Having long served as admiral of the British fleet, William was popularly called "The Sailor King." He obtained likewise the title of "The Patriot King," from the support he gave to the Reform Bill.

This important measure was designed to take away the privilege

[1] The following words of the Right Hon. William E. Gladstone, M.P., are important on this subject. They occur in his valuable pamphlet, *The Vatican Decrees in their Bearing on Civil Allegiance*, published by Murray, 1874 :—"All other Christian bodies are content with freedom in their own religious domain. Orientals, Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Nonconformists, one and all, in the present day contentedly and thankfully accept the benefit of civil order ; never pretend that the State is not its own master ; make no religious claims to temporal possessions or advantages ; and, consequently, never are in perilous collision with the State. . . . The Rome of the Middle Ages claimed universal monarchy. The Modern Church of Rome has abandoned nothing, retracted nothing. Is that all? Far from it." He then ably points out how, by the Vatican Decree, establishing the dogma of the Infallibility of the Pope, every Roman Catholic is now bound to obey the Pope in whatever matters he sees fit to exercise his authority. "We should appear," he says, "to be led, nay, driven, by just reasoning upon that documentary evidence to the conclusions :—

"1. That the Pope, authorised by his Council, claims for himself the domain (*a*) of faith, (*b*) of morals, (*c*) of all that concerns the government and discipline of the Church.

"2. That he in like manner claims the power of determining the limits of those domains.

"3. That he does not sever them by any acknowledged or intelligible line from the domains of civil duty and allegiance.

"4. That he therefore claims, and claims from the month of July 1870 onwards, with plenary authority, from every convert and member of his Church, that he shall 'place his loyalty and civil duty at the mercy of another :' that other being himself."

A curious instance of temporal authority, exercised by the Pope, has recently occurred. In acknowledgment of services rendered to the Romish Church by a gentleman in Canada, the Pope has conferred upon him the title of Count.

of representation in Parliament from small and unimportant towns and boroughs, and to give the right to larger and growingly important cities. It seems strange that so sensible a proposition as this should have been vehemently opposed. But fear makes bad politicians. The Revolution in France in 1793, and the lesser revolts which followed upon the foolish despotism of the restored monarchs of Europe, alarmed quiet people and anxious statesmen. In every stir for increased representation, they dreaded an uprising of the masses, with confusion, bloodshed, and ruin. Consequently, the excitement throughout the country became tremendous, and the scenes in the Houses of Lords and Commons were not unlike those in the stormy days of Charles I.

The Reform Bill was introduced into Parliament by Lord John Russell on the 1st of March 1831. It was supported by the thundering eloquence of Lord Brougham, and opposed with determination by Wellington and Peel. Its temporary defeat in the House of Lords produced great dismay. Riots were frequent. Nottingham Castle was burnt down. An angry mob at Bristol set fire to the jail, burnt the bishop's house, and would have burnt the cathedral, but for the strenuous efforts of one man, and he a dissenter! A revolution might have occurred, had not the king proclaimed his approval of the Bill, and his determination to uphold his Ministers in passing it.

Parliament met again. Fresh difficulties arose. The king wavered. The Prime Minister, Lord Grey, resigned. The Duke of Wellington was called upon to form a new Ministry, but even he could not accomplish this, in the face of the violent national excitement. Lord Grey was recalled, and in 1832 the Bill at last safely passed, by a majority in the Lords of 106 to 22.

The reign of William IV. is likewise made illustrious by the crowning Act for the Abolition of Slavery.

The slave trade had been abolished, after a hard struggle, conducted by William Wilberforce, Zechariah Macaulay, Clarkson, and Babington. On the 30th of August 1833, the Act for the Abolition of Slavery was passed, and a gift of £20,000,000 of money was granted to the slave-owners of the West Indies, in compensation for

the loss of negro labour. From the 1st of August 1834, every man, woman, and child of every race born within the British Empire was to be free. It was not, however, till 1838 that the complete emancipation of all slaves took effect, and the desires of Wilberforce were thus fully realised.

William IV. died on the 20th of June 1837, and was succeeded by his niece, Queen Victoria.

CHAPTER L.

VICTORIA, A.D. 1837–1901—EXTENSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

One more reign remains to be recorded, and that the longest, the happiest, and the most glorious in English History, the reign of Queen Victoria.

The death of the Duke of Kent in January 1820 left his infant child, Victoria, the heir to the throne. When twelve years old a genealogical map was placed before her, in which for the first time she became aware of the exalted position awaiting her. "I never saw that before," she said; and added, after a pause, "Now, many a child would boast, but they don't know the difficulty. There is much splendour, but there is much responsibility." Then, laying her little right hand in that of her governess, she earnestly said, "I will be good."

This little incident showed how the wisely conducted education given her by her mother was already bearing fruit. The Duchess of Kent brought her up very carefully, training her in habits of industry, self-control, and kindness to all around her; while at the same time her excellent intellectual powers were also fully developed.

The 20th of June 1837 was the memorable day when the young princess became Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. At 2 o'clock in the morning the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chancellor came to Kensington to inform her of the death of her uncle King William, and to acknowledge her as queen. It was a striking scene. Hardly awakened "in her white dressing-gown, her pretty hair falling on her shoulders,"[1] she received these dignitaries alone, but with quiet

[1] Mrs. Oliphant.

self-possession, simply asking the Archbishop to pray. Then when these "splendid messengers had left, she hurried to her mother, and throwing herself into her arms wept to her heart's content." Elizabeth Barrett Browning has recorded these tears in a beautiful poem, from which we give the first and last verses.

VICTORIA'S TEARS.

"'O Maiden! heir of kings!
A king has left his place!
The majesty of Death has swept
All other from his face!
And thou upon thy Mother's breast,
No longer lean adown,
But take the glory for the rest,
And rule the land that loves thee best!
The Maiden wept;
She wept, to wear a crown!

. . . . . .

God bless thee, weeping Queen,
With blessing more divine!
And fill with better love than earth's
That tender heart of thine!
That when the throne of earth shall be
As low as graves brought down;
A piercëd hand may give to thee
The crown which angels shout to see!
Thou wilt not *weep*,
To wear that heavenly crown!"

On the 10th of February 1840 Queen Victoria was married to her second cousin, Albert, son of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, with whom she passed years of as high and pure felicity as can be tasted on earth. For Albert was indeed an ideal prince, of noble character, and of fine and well-cultivated intellect. Utterly unselfish, he devoted himself entirely to her interests, striving to lighten her heavy burden of responsibility, and in every way possible to add to her happiness and to lighten her anxieties.

These anxieties were by no means small during the early years of her reign. The people were poor, and clamoured for cheap bread, and the abolition of the Corn Laws which checked the supply of food from abroad. Farmers, on the other hand, thought that without these laws they would be ruined by foreign competition; and Lord Melbourne, the Queen's first Prime Minister, declared that to his mind

their abolition would be "the wildest and maddest scheme that has entered into the imagination of man to conceive." However, Sir Robert Peel succeeded in bringing in a bill for their gradual repeal, and in 1846 they were done away with altogether. "I shall be remembered, perhaps, with gratitude," said Peel, "by the poor to whom I have given cheap bread." It was impossible for him to anticipate the extraordinary facilities for importation of food which have since arisen, and which certainly bear hard on English agriculture.

The immediate relief, however, consequent upon Free Trade, helped to quiet the country, while revolution after revolution broke out abroad, and many rulers were compelled to abdicate. The first Great Exhibition, held in Hyde Park in May 1851, seemed to many a harbinger of lasting peace. The original idea of it came from the Prince Consort, and the Queen thus described its success: "A complete and beautiful triumph, a glorious and touching sight, one that I shall ever be proud of for my beloved Albert and my country."

Alas! public and private sorrows soon followed this joyful event. In 1854 the only European war of Victoria's reign broke out, the Crimean War, intended to check the supposed ambitious designs of Russia against Turkey. The armies of France and Italy fought side by side with that of Great Britain, and in 1855 they took Sevastopol, and Russia soon after sued for peace. One result was that the protectorate assumed by the Czar over the Christian subjects of Turkey was claimed by the united European Governments, with what little good result, however, was shown by the massacre of 100,000 Christians in Armenia alone in 1896–97.

On the 14th of December 1861 Prince Albert died after a brief attack of typhoid fever. Called away in his prime from domestic happiness and earthly pomp, he was yet ready to go, and expressed himself as "full of happy thoughts." On the last Sunday of his life his sweet daughter Princess Alice sang to him, amongst other favourite hymns of his, the one beginning

"Rock of Ages! cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

Here lay the secret of his perfect peace.

The Queen nobly roused herself from her deep distress to resume her duties as head of the State, and these she bravely carried on through the long years of her widowhood to the close of life. Next to Divine consolation she valued the love of her people, to which the nation's Poet Laureate, Alfred Tennyson, gave touching expression—

"Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure;
Break not, for thou art royal, but endure,
Remembering all the beauty of that star
Which shone so close beside thee that ye made
One light together, but has past and leaves
The crown a lonely splendour.

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow thee,
The love of all thy sons encompass thee,
The love of all thy daughters cherish thee,
The love of all thy people comfort thee,
Till God's love set thee at his side again!"

During the reign of Queen Victoria, England began to wake up more thoroughly to the great advance which had been made by her colonies and to their enormous value. Australia, for example, is the largest island in the world, and by "Australian Heroes"[1] its vast spaces were being widely explored and utilised, great stretches of land

[1] While the early history of most countries relates fierce wars, and bloody conquests, the "Heroes of Australia" won more peaceful triumphs over nature. Desperate were their struggles, and great their hardships, from the frequent lack of water, the great heat, the sandy deserts, and the tangled overgrowth of its forests. Australia will never forget them. To one of them a monument has been erected in his own native land with the following inscription:—

IN HONOUR OF JOHN WILLS,

NATIVE OF TOTNESS,

THE FIRST WITH BURKE TO CROSS THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINENT.

HE PERISHED IN RETURNING 28TH JUNE

1861.

ERECTED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION.

AUGUST 1864.[2]

[2] *N.B.*—See *Australian Heroes*, by Charles H. Eden. (London: S.P.C.K.)

being available either for agriculture or for pasture. Wide forests were checked in their overgrowth and partly cut down. Great cities arose, and in the summer of 1900, the Australian Commonwealth was formed, comprising "the six original States of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and the adjacent island of Tasmania, or Van Dieman's Land."

Canada is of equal importance. It includes a very large portion of North America, and stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Within its compass climates vary from the Arctic snows to the tropical heat of New Caledonia. Millions of acres fit for the growth of wheat tempt the English labourer, and great rivers are ready to convey all the treasures of the land to the sea, including valuable timber, and many minerals. Canada, indeed, being so early reached by the fast steamers of the nineteenth century, seems a land of hope for our redundant population.

While Great Britain enjoyed perfect tranquillity in this reign, our soldiers were occupied in many wars abroad. Amongst these the most important were in India. There many Generals won their laurels, from the days of Sir Charles Napier, who with 3000 British troops put 24,000 bold Beluchis to flight, down to our own times and our honoured Lord Roberts. None of these heroes were greater than the Punjaub Generals, the Lawrences, Havelock, Outram, Nicholson, Sir Colin Campbell, and others, who saved India for us after the terrible mutiny of native troops in 1857. In 1858 the East India Company came to an end, and a few years later Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. "The vast territory of India may be taken as 1,700,000 square miles in extent, of which 750,000 are under native, and the rest under British, administration." Alike in New Zealand and in North West America the original natives have submitted to our rule, and are numbered now amongst our happy subjects.

China has had to give us ports, and, though now full of turmoil, her ancient isolation has been completely dispelled.

Our conquests in East and West Africa have brought vast dominions and peoples under our sway, while the ancient land of Egypt is regaining prosperity under our superintendence.

QUEEN VICTORIA.

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In South Africa many years of vacillating policy have involved us in frequent strife with the Dutch Boers, and the unexpected prolongation of the last war with them threw a dark shadow over the close of Victoria's reign.

It is impossible in a few words to describe all the equally wonderful triumphs of peace in our land. Science, Art, Literature, and Commerce have flourished alike; and many Acts of Parliament have received our sovereign's sanction, framed for the benefit of the working classes and all who need protection, children, women, or the sick.

In 1887 the Queen's first Jubilee was celebrated with universal enthusiasm. In 1897 her Diamond Jubilee, or the 60th year of her rule, was the occasion of still greater rejoicing. Escorted by a brilliant procession of foreign princes, of her own nobles, and of delegates from every quarter of the globe where floats the British Flag, Queen Victoria drove through the streets of London to St. Paul's Cathedral. At its entrance she was met by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and after a brief prayer offered by him, the 100th Psalm was sung, and joined in by the vast multitudes assembled. Thus was glory rendered by England's Queen and England's people to the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Once more a great procession passed through the streets of the Metropolis, when the funeral of the beloved Queen took place. She died on Tuesday evening, January 22, at Osborne, in the Isle of Wight. On February 1st her body was conveyed on board the steam yacht *Alberta*, and between long lines of British men-of-war was borne towards her capital city. "The scene was indescribable; the sun was setting in all his glory; the *Alberta* floated in the golden pathway; the coffin, with the crown, sceptre, and orb, were lighted up; the guns booming; and the strains of her favourite hymn, 'The saints of God, their conflict past,' floated over the water."[1] Next day the solemn cortege passed through London, the utter silence of the crowds who filled the streets testifying their sympathy with more eloquence than any words could have done. As the procession neared Windsor, the horses which dragged the gun-

[1] These are the words of one who witnessed the scene, Agnes Weston, the Sailors' Friend.

carriage, whereon the silent Queen lay, became restive, and some of her own "bluejackets" willingly drew it the rest of the way. She was then laid to rest in the beautiful chapel which she had built for the tomb of the Prince Consort, and where she had caused these words to be inscribed—

"Farewell—beloved! Here at last I will rest with thee; with thee, in Christ, I will rise again."

With what epithet shall her people record her name? Surely she will ever be remembered alike as Victoria the Great, the Wise, the Good; our own Victoria the Loving and the Beloved.

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CHAPTER LI.

A GLANCE AT THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

WHILE noting the stirring events and exciting scenes of history, one is apt to leave unobserved the gradual progress of civilisation. Its advance, though at times interrupted and lost sight of, like that of a river flowing for a while underground, is slow but certain, till at last, on looking back, one is surprised to find how far behind the old landmarks have been left.

It is very interesting to study this progress.

At first we see the Britons, the earliest inhabitants of our land, not altogether barbarians, coming into contact in their Roman conquerors with the then highest civilisation of the world. Treated as slaves, they yet gained much from their rulers; but with the departure of the imperial legions, they soon fell into a miserable condition, and were swept away before their new Saxon invaders.

The Saxons themselves, even after the introduction of Christianity, remained long in a rude and only partially civilised state. Even the sons of nobles and kings received only a very slight amount of education, which ceased at fourteen years of age. The mass of the people were only half free, and many were altogether serfs or slaves, though under the influence of Christianity these were often set free. But we must not suppose that the lower classes were always badly treated; though not allowed to leave the place where they were born, they and their children usually enjoyed a rude sufficiency for their wants, and were without care for the morrow. Often they were nobly devoted to their masters. Thus we read of the servants of the King of Mercia scorning to receive a bribe, and dying to a man in the hopeless defence of their master.

The Saxons built churches and castles of stone, but the poor doubtless lived in huts. Music and poetry were common amongst all classes at feasts, but immoderate eating and drinking were still more usual.

"The lord and his men,
Drunk with wine,
Till that they swimming lay
Over drunk,
All his nobility
As they were death-slain."—*From a Saxon Poem.*

The bondage of the ceorls, or peasants, became yet more bitter after the Norman invasion, and they sighed after the rules of Edward the Confessor. But the depths of their sufferings became unbearable, and although their early attempts at freedom partially failed, by degrees they gained their complete liberty, and then rapidly grew in importance, and became themselves yeomen, or small holders of land.

The Normans brought some amount of refinement into our land, which blended with the manners of the Saxons as their French language did with the English. But the strong Saxon nature prevailed over that of the Normans, and the conquering race was mingled and lost among the conquered English. But little real advance was made till the epoch arrived of the invention of printing, which soon revolutionised the world. In early days the priests and monks were the greatest benefactors of England; it was they who introduced Christianity, taught the people agriculture, and furnished peaceful retreats from war and outrage. But as they became wealthy they degenerated. Compulsory celibacy led to immorality. The follies, vices, and covetousness of their orders became a byword. With the decrease of true religion superstition increased. The people were taught to adore relics, to worship the Virgin as the Queen of Heaven, and the Sunday discourses of the preachers were usually a strange compound of old legends with Scripture stories.

It is difficult to picture to ourselves life in those days: scarcely a book to be seen in the houses; no tea or coffee on the tables; no glass in the windows; no potatoes, or gooseberries, or currants in the gardens; no cricket, no football! There were, however, some old

games, such as morris and hockey, and bob-apple, or ducking for apples, a favourite sport of the boys. Tournaments were the favourite amusements of the rich, in which they imitated battle in times of peace. There were no coaches till the days of Queen Elizabeth, when the first seen was thought to be "a strange monster, and the sight of it put both horse and man into amazement. Some said it was a great crab-shell brought out of China, and some imagined it to be one of the pagan temples in which cannibals adored the devil."

Early rising was a Norman habit. They said—

"To rise at five, to dine at nine,
To sup at five, to bed at nine,
Makes a man live to ninety-nine."

Boars' heads, peacocks, cranes, and sometimes porpoises appeared at the feasts of the wealthy. The Normans were fond of dress, and indulged in long flowing locks, for which sometimes the preachers reproved them. Once a bishop at the close of his sermon produced scissors, and "cropped the heads both of the king and the congregation!"

The people were like children, easily moved to tears; and even at the close of a discourse in Latin, of which they did not understand a word, we are told they "hurried forward in crowds to enroll themselves for the Crusades!"

The towns began to rise in importance in the twelfth century. London was then considered "a marvellous city, having 40,000 inhabitants. It was bounded by a high wall with seven gates." In 1400 we read that England was "full of towns and villages." Great pomp was displayed on State occasions. When Henry V. returned after his victory at Agincourt, he was met in London by the mayor and aldermen, all in red with white hoods, and 20,000 citizens. As he rode through the streets, the windows of which were hung with tapestry, a shower of live birds was let loose to flutter over his victorious head.

The long-continued civil wars between the houses of York and Lancaster were marked by great cruelty. The combatants on either side seemed to lapse into barbarism. In the horrible battle of Towton alone, fought on Palm Sunday 1462, no quarter was given, and after

five hours of desperate conflict, 38,000 lay dead on the field, outnumbering the English slain in five of the Duke of Wellington's battles, including Waterloo! The reign of the Tudors in the sixteenth century brought in a new order of things. Henry VII. laid up wealth, and Henry VIII. spent it, thus giving a great impetus to commerce. But that period was marked by the great disgrace of religious persecution, the strangest blot on the Christianity of the past. Two causes gave it birth,—one was the ignorance of Scripture in all classes, and hence the neglect of our Saviour's precepts of love and compassion. The other was the claim of the Romish Church, ever increasing in arrogance, to rule over the thoughts and consciences of men. To think for themselves, to differ from the priesthood, was regarded as a sin of deepest dye. The spirit of persecution appeared in fullest force in the reign of Mary, and was rapidly weakened by the spread of the knowledge of the gospel, though lingering still (especially in Roman Catholic lands) wherever the priests have supreme power.

The glory and prosperity of the days of good Queen Bess have already been described. Henceforward, arts, literature, and science advanced rapidly in our land. Even the civil wars of the Stuarts seemed but slightly to check their progress, while in those wars themselves there was a marked absence of the ferocity shown in the York and Lancaster strife.

Yet, even as late as the commencement of our own century, there remained very much to lament in the state of our country. Until after the reign of George III., who greatly encouraged agriculture, much land was left either wholly waste or very imperfectly tilled. Our criminal laws abounded in "outrageous penalties." A theft of property above 40s. in value was punished by death. Forgery was so likewise. "From the Restoration of Charles II. to the death of George III., no fewer than 187 capital offences were added to the Criminal Code. To Sir Samuel Romilly belonged the merit of first pleading the necessity of softening the rigour of our laws, and his important Acts were ably followed up by those of Sir Robert Peel. The prisons were fearful dens. John Howard, born in 1726, was the first to expose and attempt to lessen their horrors. Two noble women,

Sarah Martin, a poor Yarmouth dressmaker, and Elizabeth Fry, a Quaker lady, followed up his good work.

Throughout England deplorable ignorance and credulity prevailed even a hundred years ago. In Northamptonshire it was customary to kill a calf to stop the murrain! Hannah More (born in 1745) declared that on first going to Cheddar, near the cathedral city of Wells, she found "more than 200 people in the parish almost all very poor; no gentry; a dozen wealthy farmers, hard, brutal, ignorant. We saw but one Bible in all the parish, and that was used to prop a flower-pot!" To her belongs the merit of being the first to write tracts specially for the poor. To Robert Raikes, as the founder of Sunday schools, and to Joseph Lancaster, who started a simple system of education for the least and lowest, also belong high honour.

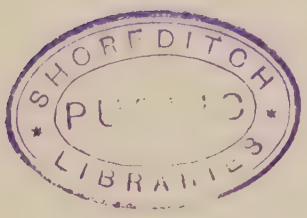
The efforts of George Whitfield and of John Wesley produced a remarkable revival of religion. At first they suffered much persecution, and were often brutally assaulted by the mobs to whom they preached in the open air. Subsequently an evangelical revival in our own Church led to the foundation of the Bible Society, and of the Church Missionary Society.

At the close of the reign of William IV., the people of England may be described as being in possession of a very fair amount of the blessings of peace, liberty, religious education, and general knowledge. The invention of the Spinning Jenny by Hargreave in 1764, and of the spinning machine by Arkwright in 1767, revolutionised the weaving trade. The discoveries by Watts and others of the power of steam were followed by stupendous results, affecting our whole commercial and social life. The nation was fairly embarked in the road of progress and prosperity. The further advance during the reign of Queen Victoria has been marvellous. Railway travelling has been developed. The use of gas has become common. Electricity has been applied to a variety of uses. In fact, everywhere and in every direction there has been a vast amount of progress.

But perhaps the crowning glory of the reign has been the recent outburst of loyalty in all our Colonies, called into action by the war in South Africa. Henceforward, indeed, the term the British Empire

is no mere figure of speech. One heart seems to beat throughout all its whole extent, and in every quarter of the globe men of British descent share the same ruling passions, the love of Liberty, of Loyalty, and of Honour. Long may this remain the case, and Christianity, the source of these feelings, continue to be the chief blessing of our land.

THE END.



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